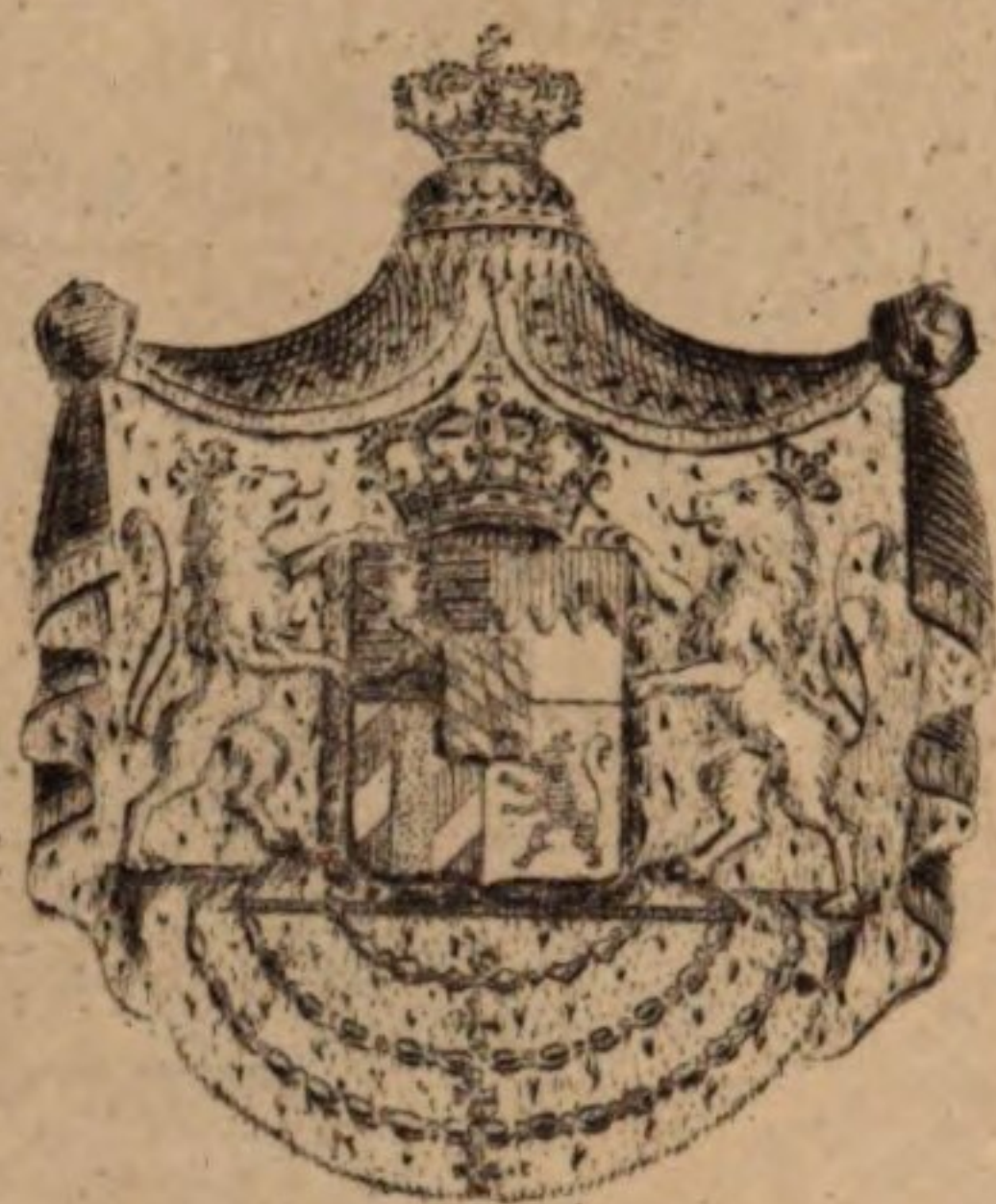




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VOL. CCXLIV.

CHEVELEY;
OR,
THE MAN OF HONOUR.

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CHEAVEY;
OF
THE MAN OF HONOUR.

CHEVELEY;

OR,

THE MAN OF HONOUR.

BY LADY LYTTON BULWER.

I speak
Of what I know, and what I feel within.

WORDSWORTH.

“Quare tunc formandi mores (inquit Erasmus) cum mollis adhuc ætas; tunc optimis assuescendum cum ad quidvis cereum est ingenium.”

“Le mariage est une chose très sérieuse; on n’y peut pas trop penser—heureux ceux qui y pensent toute leur vie!”



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1839.

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TO

NO ONE NOBODY, Esq.,

OF NO HALL, NOWHERE.

DEAR SIR,—In dedicating this work to you, I acquit myself of a debt of gratitude to the only man whose integrity I have found unimpeachable, and whose friendship I have proved unvarying. Among the most deserving of my own sex, I have, in many instances, found sincere and unchanging affection, united with those higher and rarer virtues, which, from adorning, reconcile us to human nature, though truth compels me to acknowledge that I have known others whose deep-rooted selfishness, puerile vanity, and vacillating weakness of character proved them to be “nature’s worst anomalies”—masculine women!

In enumerating the catalogue of *your* virtues, you cannot tax me with that servility of flattery which you are the only man in the world who would disdain—since every one is aware it has even passed into a proverb, that *Nobody* is perfection. In your literary career, you have neither evinced nor experienced envy; but then it is acknowledged on all sides, that your genius excels that of Shakspeare, Milton, Byron, Bacon, Locke, Scott, and Moore, your learning exceeds that of Bayle, and your science that of Newton. In patriotism, you go beyond the heroes of ancient Rome, and you are the only person whose politics would bear to be analyzed by the most chemical scrutiny. Yet, here you have shared the lot of humanity, and have been the victim of calumny; as it is only a short time ago that your friends, the Whigs, accused you of anti-

cipating Lord Durham's speech, and sending it to the *Times*. The world, however, did not attach the slightest credence to the accusation: yet, with unceasing fidelity, you, and *you only*, continue to believe the Whigs honest! Your domestic virtues, if possible, exceed your public ones; you are an exemplary husband; and such a father! and, with a generosity truly unparalleled, take upon yourself all the blame of all the mischief done in every house. Generally speaking, Folly's cap and bells are to be found as often, if not oftener, on the hoary head of age, as on the Hyperian curls of youth; but you are an exception, for you are the only man whom "flattery fools not," or interest does not warp—ay, even the small paltry interest of a dinner, a speech, a paragraph in a newspaper, or a tabouret in a demoralized and demoralizing coterie. "Such divinity doth hedge" the vices of men, that no man cares to expose or interfere with those of another; the protecting laws for infamy which themselves have made, they must not of course infringe, for as Claudian truly says,

"Patire legem quam ipse tulisti,
Incommune jubes siquid censes ve tenendum,
Primus jussa subi, tunc observantior æqui,
Fit populus, nec ferre vetat cum viderit ipsum
Autorem parere sibi."

Therefore is it that whatever the injuries, outrages, and persecutions of we women may be, men invariably, whether from cowardice, coldness, craft, caution, self-interest, or selfishness, shrink from all interference in our legitimate ill-treatment; and, mark my words, dear sir, Sergeant Talfourd's Custody of Infants' Bill will never pass, for he is only likely to have *your* assistance; and, with regard to our sex, men are members of nature's inquisition, whose profligacy can only flourish and be protected by keeping the instruments of torture in their own hands.

As far back as 732, the cavalry of the Arabians, like that of their ancestors, the Parthians, was extremely formidable, and the Franks (not M.P.'s), whose armies were composed solely of infantry, found it difficult to resist the attacks of so versatile an enemy, or even to derive any permanent advantage from success. So it is with us women; our enemy is so versatile, consisting of law, custom, and might, that we can only fight after the Parthian fashion—throw down our arrows and fly; all our efforts for justice or redress must be unavailing, till, *as a sex*, we feel for and defend ourselves. Abstract and unorganized efforts never have, and never

will achieve a victory ; to our individual struggles men may still answer like the fox in the fable, when the cat boasted her superior skill.

“ Tu prétends être fort habile,
En sais-tu tant que moi ? J'ai cent ruses au sac.
Non, dit l'autre : je n'ai qu'un tour dans mon bissac ;
Mais je soutiens qu'il en vaut mille.”

And their one trick, worth our thousand, is *power* !

Knowing, dear sir, that you are always more busy than any one else, I will not trespass longer on your valuable time, than to assure you that I am, and ever shall be,

Your devoted admirer,

And much obliged servant,

THE AUTHOR.

Bath, March 27, 1839.

will achieve a victory: to our individual struggles men may still
answer like the fox in the fable, when the cat boasted her superior
skill.

"In pretence she lost patience
To see in hand the mouse; 'I'll vent thee an ear,
Soon, till I strike: he will do in four days more
More he counts on than on that miller."

And their own trick, worth our thousand, is power!
Knowing, dear sir, that you are always more busy than any one
else, I will not trespass longer on your valuable time, than to assure
you that I am, and ever shall be,

Your devoted admirer,

And much obliged servant,

THE AUTHOR.

Paris, March 27, 1838.

CHEVELEY;

OR,

THE MAN OF HONOUR.



CHAPTER I.

With all its sinful doings, I must say
That Italy's a pleasant place to me,
Who love to see the sun shine every day,
And vines (not nail'd to walls) from tree to tree,
Festoon'd much like the back scene of a play,
Or melodrame, which people flock to see,
When the first act is ended by a dance
In vineyards copied from the south of France.—BYRON.

FOR such as believe that Love is and ought to be omnipotent, the following "tale" can have but little attraction; and, on the other hand, to those, the unmercifully virtuous, who deem that to "feel tempted, is to sin," and who in their notions of the perfectable capacities of human nature, go beyond Pythagoras and Plato, it will have still less: for to them, the many-languaged voice of the passions is the unknown tongue of St. Paul, requiring interpretation; they are indeed "righteous over much," yet wanting all

"The fair humanities of old religion."

Oh! how many uncanonized martyrs there are in every-day domestic life, hourly warring both with the flesh and the spirit (and literally taking up their cross daily); and this must ever be the case as long as men continue to enforce the laws of God grammatically, thereby assuming a wide difference between the masculine and feminine, which is no where to be found in the text! "C'est un triste métier que celui de femme," says the French proverb, and it says truly. In society, the worst-conducted women generally fare the best, because their provocations to misconduct are often most humanely and charitably allowed; while the really virtuous almost invariably find coolness and insensibility, or want of temptation, the only merits awarded to them. But it is in England alone that there is a dark and jesuitical hypocrisy in the systematically unjust conduct of men towards women; and those gentlemen who write the most liberally and lachrymosely about the errors of female

education, which tends to stultify their intellect, warp their judgment, weaken the moral tone of their natures, and in every way unfit them to be the friends and companions of men, are the very first practically to labour for this state of things, which they affect to deprecate. As most husbands appear to think, that if their wives have a second idea, the world cannot be large enough for them both, any more than two suns can shine in one hemisphere. But the manner of evincing this opinion is even more offensive than the opinion itself, as they never cease to "afficher" the veto that women have no right even to mental free will, and are as much surprised at their daring to express an opinion different to that they have been commanded to entertain, as if the ground on which they walked were suddenly to exclaim, "Don't trample on me so hardly!" Then come the ex-parte judgments of how far things ought to annoy or please others — a matter perfectly impossible to be decided upon, but by self; so true is the assertion of Epictetus, "that men are more tormented by the opinion of things than by the things themselves."

To those who require in print the extremes of virtue and vice, which are not in human nature, I repeat that these volumes can have little attraction; but to such as are aware that our nature, like our fate, is of "a mingled yarn of good and evil," there may be something in them not wholly uninteresting.

Heir to a marquise, and immense wealth, his father dying when he was little more than five years old, and his mother before he was twenty, Augustus Mowbray was the spoiled child of nature and fortune; consequently, at the age of eight-and-twenty (the period when this history commences), he had begun to consider mankind as divided into two great classes — the boring and the bored; the first being formed by those who write and talk, and the latter by those who read and listen, "blasé sur tout." His creed was taken from that pithy line in the "Rejected Addresses," which asserts that "nought is every thing, and every thing is nought." This truth, which he felt every moment of his life, strange to say, only impelled him the more violently to be eternally in search of something: the unknown future was always to him "that blest Canaan that should come at last," and locomotion he deemed the only method by which it could be attained.

To Italy once more then he determined to wend his way, in his Sisyphus task of toiling after happiness. As a burnt child dreads the fire, so most persons dread a story, the scene of which is laid abroad, as they almost invariably find themselves, like Marius amid the ruins of Carthage, overwhelmed with towers, turrets, temples, statues, palaces, prisons, aqueducts, and fountains; but in these pages they will have nothing of this sort either to fear or to hope; and let those who are not already sated with descriptions of "the

sweet South," read Mrs. Starke, believe Child Harold, and dream of Corinne.

Horace Walpole complains of having "lived post" all his life; poor man—that was nothing! Mowbray had lived steam! and consequently had had no time to like, much less to love, any thing; yet there was a similarity in their fates. Horace had one happy moment, which he describes by saying, "Tanton" (the dog Madame Du Deffand sent him,) "Tanton and I jumped into a bed as hot as an oven." Now Mowbray's happy moment was, when he jumped into a britschka with his friend Saville, as easy as Collinge's axletree and under-springs could make it, and found himself on his road to Italy for the fourth time, literally in search of a pursuit!

"In England," said he, "there is no opening. Love is like every thing else in our nation of shopkeepers, wholly commercial in politics: one is a mere Dogberry, eternally looking back upon all the political Shakespeares who have stolen one's best ideas (alias speeches); and as for society, one is tired of stalking from room to room, night after night, like a resuscitated

"Sir Plume, of amber snuff-box justly vain,
And the nice conduct of a dandied cane."

In short, in England one has the "far niente," without the "dolce;" and it was of the latter he went in quest, in the very worst stage of our national malady, "demophobia." From Paris to Geneva, the travellers contrived to sleep nearly the whole way; thus prudently providing against the time when mosquitoes and other Italian miseries would "murder sleep." They had slept through a most splendid and terrific storm in the Jura Mountains, when they were disagreeably awakened by a sudden stoppage, and the audible "sacres" of their scapin of a courier, Luigi Andare. "Canaille que vous êtes," cried the indignant Colossus of Roads, "je parlerai moi-même à monseigneur." "Et dame! vous avez beau parler, qu'est-ce que ça me fait, moi; si monseigneur était le pape, il ne pourrait pas faire des chevaux, j'espère?"

The cause of this dilemma was, that Prince Borghese having taken up twenty horses, there was none left for them; but Andare, nothing daunted, after first casting a mingled look of vengeance and contempt on the phlegmatic Maître de Poste (who stood philosophically looking on, with a hand in each pocket), approached the prince's carriage, cap in hand, and so eloquently represented to him the *propriety* of sparing his master one horse from each of his highness's carriages, that, with a bow to them, and a bene-bene to him, the triumphant Luigi, with one hand, pointed to have the horses taken off, while he shook the other menacingly doubled at the Maître de Poste. Then ensued a vituperative patois, long and loud, between these worthies, that echoed above the thunder through the mountains. "What the deuce do they say?" asked Saville.

“Why,” said Mowbray, taking upon him the office of interpreter, “there are some threats about eternal disgrace and throat-cutting ; but whether yours, mine, Andare’s, or the Maître de Poste’s, is to be the victimized thorax, I cannot take upon me precisely to say.”

“Down, Prince ! down, sir !” said Mowbray to a large black bloodhound, who, for the purpose of better barking at the oratorical Maître de Poste, had just leapt up and tried to insinuate himself as Bodkin between the two friends.

How I do pity dogs condemned to travel, especially large ones, like the “Black Prince” in question ! Poor things, they seem, with their drooping ears, melancholy eyes, and cramped paws, to go a step beyond Madame de Staël in their estimation of locomotive delights, and think that travelling is not “le plus triste de tous les plaisirs,” but “la plus triste de toutes les peines.” The gentlemen in the rumble having condescendingly united their efforts with those of Andare, the five contributed horses were soon put to, and our travellers once more “en route.” Perhaps it would have been difficult to have brought together two more opposite characters in effect than Mowbray and Saville, though their elementary qualities were much the same. The only difference consisted in the former having great enthusiasm of character, the latter great enthusiasm of manner. Saville could not descant upon a tree, a picture, or a cloud, without speaking as if his whole being were wrapped up in his subject ; while Mowbray, on the contrary, who was capable of feeling the effects of each much more deeply, would converse lightly, nay, almost coldly and critically, about them. Saville would write the most passionate love-letters, but the chivalric romance of Mowbray’s nature could make sacrifices which Saville could not even comprehend ; yet were they both generous—both high-minded—both clever. Hence the cement of their friendship ; for it is a mistake, and an egregious one, to suppose that we like our opposites. We do not like our opposite—how should we ? Since sympathy is the great tie between all human beings, as is usual with superficial observers, who generally contrive to mistake the effect for the cause, this popular fallacy has grown into a proverb. The truth is, we all like different results produced from the same sources ! just as the world is fertilized by differently directed rills, that all flow from one parent stream : but who ever heard of a generous and liberal nature feeling a strong affection for a miserly and sordid one ? though a person who was merely constitutionally lavish, would feel not only affection, but the greatest admiration for a person who might in his personal expenditure appear parsimonious, in order to have in reality the power of gratifying a generosity founded on principle. Wits, indeed, might love their fellow wits the better, were their field of action not always to be the same. Still, in order to appreciate wit, a person

must himself possess it. Who would care to be a Voltaire, if all the world were to be “des Pères Adam,” Orpheus being the only personage on record, who had the enviable power of charming brutes? What do persons mean by an agreeable companion? Certainly not one who monopolizes the whole conversation, but as certainly, one who can converse. And what does a brave person despise so much as a coward? An ill-tempered person may indeed like, “par préférence,” a good-tempered one, who hears and bears with him; but did this goodness of temper merely proceed from an apathetic coldness, which nothing could move, the odds are, they would detest them, and would rather they met on equal terms in single combat, twenty times a-day. For one great proof of sympathy being the electric conductor of human affections, look at the members of all professions, and their standard of greatness is measured by what they themselves pursue. A music-master will talk with tears in his eyes of Mozart or Rossini, and exclaim, “those, indeed, are truly great men!” Talleyrand (if he could feel) would have felt the same towards Machiavelli. Madame Michaud no doubt places Taglioni somewhere in the calendar between St. Catherine and Santa Teresa; and I’ll venture to assert that no rigid governess passed the grand climacteric, bent upon teasing her pupils to skeletons, and therefore piquing herself upon her inflexible justice, but worships the name of Aristides, and never looks upon a shell without a shudder of indignation. So much for the theory of people liking their opposites!

I only know one instance in which this is the case, and I believe it is by no means an uncommon one: I allude to the weakness of ugly men generally preferring handsome women to their own softened images. The great reason why men have no sympathy with women is, that the essential selfishness of their own natures prevents their comprehending the anti-selfishness of the other sex; and while they are eternally demanding, as their right, sympathy from them—even for their vices—they laugh at many of their feelings, merely because they cannot understand them; in short that excellent proverb, “Love me, love my dog,” is the alpha and omega of the doctrine of sympathy.

Little worth mentioning occurred to the travellers, till they reached the watchmaking city of Geneva; for it is useless to tell of the bad supper they got at Genlis (almost as bad as the sentiment and morality of its namesake, the quack comtesse), or of the good wine they got at Morez. Weary and cold, they entered Geneva of a fine September morning—before Mont Blanc had thrown off her “misty shroud,” or Monta Rosa blushed into light—too sleepy to heed even the legendary murmuring of the gentle lake, or the “blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone;” turned away from every inn within that most dirty and unbeautiful town; and driven by neces-

sity in the shape of two faded and ill-tempered postillions, they at length reached Secheron, and soon found themselves in two of Monsieur Dejeans most clean and comfortable beds ; not thinking of the past, and not dreaming of the future.

CHAPTER II.

E'en as the tenderness that hour instils,
When summer's day declines along the hills ;
So feels the fulness of the heart and eyes,
When all of genius that can perish—dies.

LORD BYRON'S *Monody on the Death of Sheridan*.

And is there then no earthly place,
Where we may rest in dream Elysian,
Without some curst round English face
Popping up near to break the vision?—MOORE.

It was about four o'clock, P.M., when Mowbray, from his bedroom windows, espied Saville in deep conference at the end of the garden with the triton of the lake, who was busily unmooring the boat, and pointing to the opposite shore. He put on his hat, and soon stood beside him.

“ My dear fellow,” said he, “ I suppose you are going over to Lord Byron's house, and as I perceive you are getting up a sensation, I will promise not to interrupt you—only let me go with you.”

Saville laughed, and they sprang into the boat together: by mutual consent they seemed to drink in the quiet beauty of the scene, for neither of them spoke till they reached the other side; when, from the confused directions of the boy who had rowed them, it seemed doubtful whether, at the end of their ramble, they should find themselves at Shelley's or Lord Byron's House.

However, trusting to their stars, and preceded by Prince, they began ascending the steep narrow lane that leads into the little village; they at length got to the wilderness of vineyards that bursts upon one, previous to the turn which leads to the house—that house which seems almost emblematic of the fortunes of its once-gifted tenant—all that relates to its domestic and homeward state, so chill and desolate.—The rusty iron gates—the grass-grown court—the dried up fountain—the two leafless trees, and the long echoing and melancholy-sounding bell; this is the home side of the house only seen by the few!

The very air feels chill and looks dark, while the side next the lake is embosomed in fertile terraces; the house itself standing upon an eminence, as if marked out as a focus for the gaze of the wide world of beauty it looks down upon, while an eternal sunlight seems to throw a halo and gild into brightness every thing in and around it.

The present owner, an English gentleman of the name of Willis,

though at home, very obligingly permitted the friends to go over it. On the left hand side of the hall is a little study opening on a terrace, where the poet used to write, and from which Lake Lemane looks its best; further on is a large and comfortable drawing-room, which has two different views of the lake; outside this room, in the centre of the hall, is a staircase, which leads to the bed-rooms, which are divided by a little gallery, lined with pictures, or rather old portraits, some of them curious enough. On the right of this gallery is the room Lord Byron used to sleep in, with its little tent-bed, and its one window looking out upon the vineyards and the lake: in one corner of this room stands an old walnut-tree *escrutoire*, on two of the drawers of which, written on white paper, in his own hand, are the following labels—"BILLS"—"LADY BYRON'S LETTERS."

"Now, really," said Mowbray, "though one is apt to laugh at people who run miles to look on those who have seen 'Sir Walter's head, Lord Byron's hat,' and all that sort of thing; yet I confess, that I cannot look round this little room, and upon these spots of ink, which I dare say he dashed impatiently out of his pen, as he put 'the letters' into the drawer, without a weakness, that brings my heart into my eyes, for one feels a part of one's own being annihilated, when one thinks that a mighty spirit has passed from the earth for ever, while such frail memorials of it as these remain long after to remind us of it!"

"This from *you*, Mowbray, of all people in the world! Why, I did not know you were such an enthusiastic admirer of Lord Byron's."

"Of the *man*, perhaps not—but of the *genius*, yes; though I am not sure he was worse than his peers in that respect. I have long had a pet theory concerning authors; I doubt very much if the outside of a beautiful face is more different from the bone and arteries that compose it within, than are books from their authors; indeed, so strongly am I imbued with this idea, that I sometimes fancy Dr. Johnson must have been in reality an atheist, and Tom Paine a fanatic!"

Just at this moment, Prince, who was sitting in the middle of the room, with his ears erect, blinking his eyes at a sunbeam, crouched his head for a moment, and then lifting up his face, gave three of those shrill melancholy howls, with which dogs sometimes startle the superstitious. What could it be? Was it the shade of Byron, like that of Theseus on Marathon, which had past and "smote without a blow?" The poor animal seemed evidently uncomfortable, and walking to the door, scratched and listened at it, till his master let him out. They cast "one long, lingering look" at the little deserted chamber, and descended once more into the

grass-grown court. They had scarcely drawn the rusty iron gate after them, albeit in no merry mood, when, lo! puffing and panting up the lane, one of those ubiquitous rubicund Anglo visions burst upon them, which let no way-worn traveller in a foreign land hope to escape. It was no less a personage than one of their outlawed compatriots, Major Nonplus, taking his *appetitenal* walk before dinner, and looking, in his red Belcher cravat, Flamingo face, and scarlet waistcoat, for all the world like an ambulating carbuncle, trying to extinguish the setting sun.

Major Nonplus was one of those clever managing mortals, who, with little money or credit, always contrived to keep more carriages, horses, and houses, than any one else; he was also one of those innumerable “best-natured creatures in the world,” always bent upon *making every body comfortable*, and therefore succeeding in making every body miserable. Had a dowager manœuvred so as her daughter should sit next a duke’s elder son, or a snobbish “millionnaire” of a county member at dinner, Major Nonplus instantly started up and divided them on the gallant and facetious plea, that he could not possibly sit next to Mrs. Nonplus (to whose tender mercies he had been purposely consigned). Was he admitted to a morning visit by some Johnny Raw of a footman (for in all houses where he had appeared twice, a preventive porter was stationed, who knew him to be contraband), and saw two friends confidentially conversing, he invariably out-stayed the first comer, thinking that the host or hostess would enjoy an *agreeable* “tête-à-tête” with him, “when the coast was clear!” Did he encounter two lovers in a shady walk, he instantly joined them, “fearing the young people might be dull.” Did the mother of five “pelican daughters” (all unmarried) happen to observe with a sigh, that she had never been at Clifton but once, when her youngest darling Jemima had the scarlet fever, the major instantly observed, with that chronological memory so dreadfully prevalent among common people—

“Ah, I perfectly remember it was there I first had the pleasure of meeting you: let me see—that was in the autumn of ninety eight, and Miss Jemima was then a little urchin of four or five years old, and a remarkably clever, forward little thing she was too; any one would have taken her for seven or eight. True, I assure you—I never flatter!”

Did he encounter an acquaintance in a packet, whose wife some three years before might have eloped from him, the major would instantly, before the assembled audience on the quarterdeck, grasp his hand, and calling him by his name, assure him, though he had never written to him since poor Mrs. So-and-so’s *mishap*, that he most sincerely pitied him! Did he venture to bet on a rubber, when congratulated upon his good luck in winning by the person

he had betted upon, he would reply with an amiable candour that baffles all description :—"My dear fellow, I owe it all to you ; I saw you revoke when your adversary's queen was out, and then I knew the game must be yours, and so I betted upon you."

The major, though no logician, was rich in proverbs which he called to his assistance upon all occasions ; and one he practically illustrated in his costume, viz., that "familiarity breeds contempt ;" for which reason there was always a species of Scotch divorce subsisting between his waistcoat and trousers, and between the latter and his Wellington boots ; though, to be sure, as "coming events cast their shadows before," in the shape of great rotundity of form, these garments had not altogether the merit of prescience in the respectful distance they kept from each other. There was one very remarkable circumstance attending Major Nonplus, which was that no one ever yet met him, that he had not either just come into a legacy of 70,000*l.*, or just been defrauded out of a similar sum : the former solved the enigma of a house in Park-lane, and a stud at Melton, while the latter as satisfactorily accounted for a cottage in the Tyrol. But whether the aforesaid 70,000*l.* was among the fashionable arrivals or departures in the major's fate, it made little difference in his hospitality, which, however, was always in the future tense ; and though *sure* of an invitation to his house, at which ever side of the channel the invited found himself, yet he could only hail it, as the witches hailed Macbeth on his Thane of Cawdor-ship, "*that is to be.*" Among his other delightful attributes, he seemed to have realized Sir Boyle Rooche's idea of a bird, and to possess the power of being "in two places at once ;" for no sooner had A left him, "taking tea and toast upon the wall of China," than B would write word he had encountered him

" 'Mid the blacks of Carolina."

This ambulating lottery-office now advanced, looking as blank as the loss of 70,000*l.* could make him ; but extending two stumpy fingers of each hand to Saville and Mowbray, exclaimed,

"Bless me ! delighted to see you. Heard how that rascal Price Hatton has behaved to me ? By George ! sir, done me out of 70,000*l.* !—Obliged to cut and run,—left poor Mrs. Nonplus buried alive in the Tyrol (where, by the by, you *must* come and see us in the spring ; *not now*, for it's damp, misty, and disagreeable), and I've just come to Geneva to see what's going on. Things have come to a pretty pass, when a man goes to Geneva for news ; but when one goes upon *tick*, can't come to a better place, eh ?—ha ! ha ! ha ! Ah ! been to see Lord Byron's house, I suppose ? Nothing very *tasty* about it ;—saw the cabinet, with the label about Lady B.'s letters ;—curious, isn't it ?—Understand he used to talk about her sometimes."

“Indeed!” said Saville and Mowbray, in a breath. “What used he to say of her?”

“Oh! that he hoped they should never meet again. Interesting anecdote, is n’t it? Thought it might please her to know that he sometimes spoke of her (‘cause it showed that he thought of her), and was going to write and tell her this *little anecdote*; but, as Mrs. Nonplus justly observed, people *are* so *odd*, and one never gets thanked for doing a good-natured thing; so I thought I had better not.”

“I quite agree with you,” said Mowbray, laughing. “I dare say she never would have had the *gratitude* to thank you for so *great a piece of kindness*.”

“Very likely not,” said the innocent major. “Been to see Ferney yet?”

“No; we only came last night.”

“Oh! well that’s all right. I can put you in the way of these things, you see:—hire a ‘char-à-banc’ to-morrow—do n’t go in your carriage—no body does it here (ahem! for a very good reason.) I’d lend you one of mine, but Mrs. Nonplus has got the chariot—the girls have taken the britschka,—and Tom—you know my son Tom—at school when you saw him—now a great strapping fellow in the Rifles—well, Tom’s got the phaeton. So you see I’m reduced to the *marrowbone* stage. I’ll go with you, and that will save you from that old bore of a gardener, who says he remembers Rousseau—no, Voltaire, is n’t it?—and all that sort of thing; and I’ll *explain away as long as you like*; besides, I suppose you’ve got Mrs. Starke: for *all* the English abroad are *Starke mad*—ha! ha! ha!—not bad is it?”

“We are going to Chamouni to-morrow, thank you,” gasped Mowbray, trying to struggle with the boring adhesiveness of the major.

“Oh! well, any oth—”

“I fear,” interrupted Saville, perceiving he was about to volunteer his services to an *any day* period; “I fear we shall be late for dinner.”

“Bless me! I hope not,” said the major, pulling his warming-pan of a watch out of his gulf of a fob; “for I am engaged to dine with Signor Bartiloni, the owner of the pretty villa at the other side of the water.”

“I am sorry to hear it,” said Mowbray; “for perhaps you would have dined with us.”

“Oh! my dear fellow, I’d much rather do that, now you mention it. I can see Bartiloni any day; but you’re on the wing; so, if you’ll allow me, I’ll just row over and tell them not to expect me, and I’ll be with you in the twinkling of an eye; but don’t wait a moment for me!—and just mention *my* name, and tell Dejean to

let you have some of that creaming Burgundy of his, of the vintage of 21,—it's the right thing, I assure you; and his sherry is very fair; but you'll find the Madeira better, and I should advise you to stick to *that*."

And so saying, the major vanished, leaving the friends in perfect despair at his non-anticipated acceptance of their invitation.

"I hope, my dear Mowbray, this will be a lesson to you never to trust to Major Nonplus's being engaged twelve deep; for you see his friendship for you is such, that he is ready to jilt any one for the pleasure of your society."

Mowbray laughed; and on reaching the boat, addressed some inquiries to the boy, touching the unhappy Signor Bartiloni, whom they were about to deprive of the major's company. The first information they reaped was, that he was at the time being in Paris, and was not expected home for a month; at which they exchanged looks and smiles. On arriving at the inn, they found their guest domiciled before them, making the tour of a tub of ice, and equally dividing his attentions between three long-necked spinster-like-looking bottles and two of more matronly dimensions.

"Ah! you see I'm to the minute;—thought it better to order the wine for you—save you trouble;—besides, Dejean dare n't hum me—know every bin in his cellar! Pray," continued the major, seating himself at the table, and arranging his napkin carefully around his chin, under the "surveillance" of his ample white cravat, after the fashion of his royal highness of —, "pray are you aware that the De Cliffords are at Milan?"

"By themselves?" asked Saville hastily, "or—or—"

"Oh no, the whole party,—the Dow looking more grim than ever, Lady De Clifford more beautiful than ever, and Miss Neville—the pretty Fanny, more fascinating than ever."

"Fanny—Miss Neville, with them?" said Saville, and his face flushed to a deep crimson.

"Why, God bless me!" said the major, "that fire is too much for you: change places with me, my dear fellow; I'm an old soldier—can stand fire, you know—ha! ha! ha!"

"Is not Lord De Clifford rather an odd person?" asked Mowbray, intuitively pitying his poor friend in the *gauche* fangs of the major.

"Oh, monstrous odd: he had been puzzling his brain upon a calculating machine (having his amiable mother, I suppose, for a model), when, lo! just as he had nearly completed it, out comes Mr. Babbage's, and obliges him to relinquish the science of numbers for the art of tormenting, which he has practised upon poor Lady De Clifford ever since. And when a man forms the laudable project of worrying his wife, he cannot have a more able coadjutor than a mother-in-law of the dowager's calibre: do you think he

can, Mowbray?—ha ! ha ! ha ! And I do n't know how it is, poor dear Fanny, who used to make all sorts of fun out of her pompous brother-in-law, and his lugubrious dam, is quite changed of late. There is no fun now left at all in her ; they say she had a love affair last year, that all went wrong, and that she's never been right since ; but I do n't believe it, for she looks as pretty as ever ; and young ladies in love ought, according to the most approved rules, always to look ill and miserable. And then poor Lady De Clifford, too—they say *she* is perfectly wretched ; but I do n't believe *that either*, for she *looks* so happy, and always seems the gayest person in a room. But there is no understanding women, they have such a confounded way of concealing their feelings. I recollect hearing that when the report came that I was killed at Waterloo, Mrs. Nonplus was at a ball, and they say she heard the *heart-rending* intelligence with as much composure as if her carriage had been announced. Wonderful, is n't it ? Now, 'pon my soul, that's true—can hardly believe it, can you ? But Mrs. Nonplus is a woman of an uncommon strong mind !”

Mowbray laughed outright, and then exclaimed in a mock heroic tone—

“ Brutus, unmoved, heard how his Portia fell—
Had Jack's wife died, he'd have behaved as well.”

“ Ah, Brutus—yes, I understand—Roman virtue, and all that sort of thing. But Mrs. N. is quite Roman, I assure you—Roman nose—very fond of Roman punch, and mends broken china with Roman cement, which shows she has it in her, you know ; but, Lord bless me ! this hermitage is quite sympathetic, for while I am growing warm about my wife, it is becoming equally so. Better ring for another bottle, my dear fellow.”

The rosy god at length subdued the major into silence, and with the assistance of two waiters, he was conveyed up stairs to bed, hiccupping out peremptory orders to be called in time to accompany his friends to Ferney in the morning.

“ I wish to Heaven,” said Saville, throwing up the window, and drawing his chair to it as soon as the major had been removed, “ I wish to Heaven I were like you, Mowbray !”

“ A propos de quoi, mon cher ?”

“ Why, *à propos* to your being like the man Prometheus made, and having no relations, at least none that have the power of advising, tormenting, and preventing you on all occasions.”

“ And so I am to be envied,” said Mowbray, laughing, “ for being ‘ lord of myself, that heritage of woe.’ I can assure you that independent isolation is by no means the happy state you be-fathered and be-uncled young gentlemen may imagine it. I often wish that I had a miserly father, a fidgety mother, or even an old maiden aunt, who doled me out her money *à la Shylock*, taking at

least a pound of flesh for every one of gold, and mortgaging my time and patience by her *exigence* every hour in the day, provided I had but any human being to care when I went, and when I came. You know how I have slaved to try and fall in love, but in vain—I have had so many rivals in my horses, houses, carriages, and estates, that I have felt jealous of myself, to say nothing of not being particularly addicted to young ladies in such a profound state of moral and intellectual innocence, that the former renders them quite unable to form a preference for one man above another, except through the medium of a rent-roll or the red-book, while the latter leaves them perfectly ignorant of the marked distinction nature has made between turnips and carrots!”

“Yes, but on the other hand, how delightful when one does chance to meet a young lady, Mowbray, who does know the difference between carrots and turnips, and who would venture to explore the perilous sea of marriage, without either the chart of the red-book, or the compass of a rent-roll—to have an uncle, from whom one ‘expects every thing’ and hopes nothing, at one side objecting, a father at the other forbidding, and a whole tribe of aunt prophecying and preaching you into an atrophy.”

“In short, this being interpreted, means that Mr. Harry Saville, a young gentleman who is to have the reversion of 10,000*l.* a year, is extremely ill-used by his relations, in not being unmolestedly allowed to marry Miss Fanny Neville, a young lady with—the reversion of nothing.”

“Well, Mowbray, they are at Milan, so pray wait till you see her before you laugh at me; not that I ever expect any sympathy from such an adamantine personage as you, who, beyond a Pigmalion passion for a statue, or a flirtation with a Dominechino, know nothing of ‘*l’étoffe de la nature que l’imagination a brodée.*’”

“Thank you,” said Mowbray, laughing, as he lit his hand-candle, “I shall take your quotation from Voltaire as a hint to go to bed, that we may be up in time to-morrow to see Ferney before we escape from Geneva and Nonplus.”

The next morning a brilliant sun lit the two friends on their way to Ferney. The vexation of spirit occasioned by the roughness of the road, had an adequate “pendant” in the vanity—the egregious, the small, the paltry vanity that meets the visiter in every turn of that far-famed spot. After driving through the very shabby entrance, you find yourself in a small hall, wherein is a large picture, designed by Voltaire himself, and executed by some wretched Swiss Dick Tinto of that era. In the foreground stands the poet brandishing the *Henriade*, which he is presenting to Apollo, who, nevertheless, appears to look on it with much the same expression with which a parish overseer rejects a petition for an additional eighteen-pence a-week. In the background is the temple of Memory,

towards which Fame appears posting with a good substantial pair of wings, at the rate of seven miles an hour. The Muses and Graces (who are evidently incog.) surround Voltaire, and bear off his bust to the Temple of Memory, while his own thoughts, viz., the heroes and heroines of the *Henriade*, are standing astonished at his wonderful talents. The authors who wrote against him are falling into the infernal regions; while Envy and her progeny are expiring at his feet; and, in order that nothing may be lost, Calas and his family are also dragged into this modest tableau. Leaving this focus of egotism and vanity, the rest of the house presents in detail these two great elements of its quondam owner; the drawing-room being ornamented with a bust of Voltaire; in his bed-room are portraits of his friends, Frederick the Great of Prussia, Le Kain, Catherine the Second of Russia, Madame du Chastelet — then again comes a portrait of Voltaire, flanked by one of Milton and Sir Isaac Newton. There is also the vase that contained his heart, before its removal to Paris, upon which is an inscription that could not have been more modest had he written it himself:

“Mon esprit est partout, et mon cœur est ici.”

The whole house reminds one of the anecdote of his sending a bunch of violets to Madame du Chastelet, when she expected at least an “aigrette” of diamonds. How the truth of her answer strikes one: “Mon ami, laisse ces niaiseries; tu n’étais pas fait pour être naturel: tu es au-dessus de cela!” At every turn, you are presented with copies of verses in praise of Voltaire, which you may buy for five francs; and the old gardener, who still remembers him, while he presents you with one of the most elaborate of these eulogiums, at the same time informs you that he had the most dreadful temper that ever was, and that they were all terribly afraid of him. Certainly, the French have more sentiment and less feeling than any people in the world;—had Tullia been a French woman, she might equally have driven over the dead body of her father; but then, what an elegy she would have written upon the event! and with what tears would she have read it out to a sympathizing and admiring audience!

Just as they were about to get into the carriage, the aforesaid old gardener inquired if they had seen Voltaire’s nightcap.

“Oui, oui,” said Mowbray laughing, “j’ai tout vu.”

“J’ai vu le soleil et la lune
Qui faisaient des discours en l’air,
J’ai vu le terrible Neptune
Sortir tout frisé de la mer!”

“Diable! mais monsieur a beaucoup vu,” said the old man, his hair standing on end as he bowed them into the carriage.

From Ferney they proceeded to Coppet. Poor Madame de Staël! in a fit of monomania she talks of the “moral air of England!”

but there really is a moral atmosphere and well-regulated look about Coppet, at least compared to Ferney. At all events it has a "soignée" English appearance, which always gives one a good opinion of the owner of a continental house, when one has been surfeited with dirt, disorder, and the fine arts. After driving through a long, straight, ugly gravel-walk road, the nice old house, with its four round quaint-looking towers, grouped like old-fashioned sentry-boxes, appears; the hall is not particularly good, but the staircase is broad and handsome;—opposite the hall-door is the library—a nice long room with pillars, and old-fashioned wire bookcases lined with green silk. The windows look out upon a pretty garden, bounded by the lake: at the upper end of the library is a large tapestried bedchamber, formerly occupied by Madame Récamier. At the lower, a door opening into the "salle à manger;" over the chimney-piece in the library is a full-length portrait of Necker, on the right of which is another of Madame Necker, and on the left one of William Schlegel—it is a heavy, stupid face. There is with all an *égaré* look about it, just the sort of astonishment his features must have expressed, when he found that he had inspired love in such a woman as Madame de Staël; while the look of thought the painter has endeavoured to *knead* into his face only makes him appear to be in the act of racking his brains for misstatements for her "Germany." Upstairs, the rooms are large and good, and accurately clean, with such a decided air of English comfort about them, that one wonders how it ever was got through "*the customs*." Next to Madame de Staël's bedroom, is the dressing-room she used to write in of a morning; the chair, the table, the inkstand, just as she left it, the windows looking out upon the lake, and Clarens—beautiful Clarens in the distance!

"Ah," said Saville, sitting down in *the* chair, and throwing open the window, "it is evidently *here* that she must have first dreamed 'Corinne,' however she may have realized it in Italy."

"Yes," laughed Mowbray, "and William Schlegel (*vide* the picture) must have been the original of that leaden lover, Lord Nelville."

"Oh, you sacrilegious dog! to speak so profanely of any of the personages mentioned in that rubric of love."

"'Peccavi,'" said Mowbray; "but recollect, that though *you* are no doubt by this time fit for canonization, *I* am not yet even a convert to the true faith; but as you seem inclined to spend the rest of your life in that chair, dreaming of your Corinne, or perhaps in the hope of becoming inspired, I must leave you, as I want to see the rest of the house."

Saville followed slowly on; in the drawing-room was Gérard's picture of Madame de Staël; the turban and attitude evidently after the manner of Dominechino's Sibyl in the Capitol, but oh!

what a difference in the face ! though the eyes are certainly remarkably fine, and there is as much beauty in the countenance as expression can give when it plays the rebel, and sets features totally at defiance.

“*I could* have been in love with that woman, too” said Mowbray, in answer to his own thoughts as he looked with folded arms earnestly at the picture. “What splendid eyes ! and what exquisitely beautiful arms !—I always admired beautiful arms—one sees them so seldom.”

“This could not be said of hers,” said Saville, laughing ; “for as tradition hath it, she displayed them on all occasions ; and even with posterity she appears determined (forgive the pun) to carry it ‘*vi et armis*,’—but that eternal palm-branch in her hand, I wonder why she should retain that, even in her picture.”

“Because, in her generation, she yielded the palm to none ; and now, Master Harry, you have pun for pun. But what a sweet, gentle, feminine picture that is of the Duchess de Broglie ! the word lovely seems made on purpose to be applied to it.”

“It is indeed very lovely,” said Saville, “and I dare say she was the original of Lucille, there is something very English in the whole contour.”

“Now as you love me, Hal, never undertake to praise me, if you laud after that fashion. English-looking ! that is an epithet which never can be eulogistic, except as applied to boards, beds, beefsteaks, and bottled porter ; but to apply it to the gentler sex ;—Harry, Harry, it is the last, the very last insult which injury should provoke a man to offer to a woman. What think you they keep French abigails for, employ French milliners, adopt French morals, and endure as many privations and abominations in continental tours, as a retreating army in an Egyptian campaign, if it is to be called English-looking at last ! ‘Go to and mend thy manners.’”

On each side of the mantel-piece were miniatures, into one of which poor Monsieur Rocard had slunk ; into the other Monsieur Auguste, with a great deal of French beauty about him, (that is to say, “*coiffé en coup de vent*,”) and that sort of half Agamemnon, half Antinoüs look, which all the Monsieur Augustes possess—that have ever been, or that ever will be transmitted to posterity, through the medium of ivory or canvas. Out of the drawing-room, is a very nice comfortable billiard-room with busts round it, and though the house had not been inhabited for some time, it had a peculiarly inhabited look.

“Coppet !” said Mowbray, as they descended the stairs, “thy mistress is no more—then why dost thou seem so cheerful, since thou ‘ne’er will look upon her like again?’”

That night the friends slept at Mellerie ; to their shame be it confessed, they thought not once of Jean-Jacques, or even of his

tertian ague Julie, and St. Preux, till the hostess announced that no trout could be got for supper.

“ ‘Comment, il n’y a pas de truite ! à Mellerie ? ’ ” cried Saville, and then slapping his forehead like a despairing lover, exclaimed, “ ‘L’eau est profonde ; la roche est escarpée, et je suis au désespoir, parce qu’il n’y pas de truite pour le souper ! mais comme toutes mes espérances sont détruites pour aujourd’hui, je les aurai pour le déjeuner demain.’ ”

“ I think,” said Mowbray, laughing at this rhapsody, and still more at the landlady’s astounded face, and Andare’s horrified one, at this profane quotation from the Heloise—“ I think you had better go to bed, or else you will pun yourself into a fever. ”

“ Or sup full of horrors if I remain,” said Saville, as he glanced at the first “ entrée,” a nondescript-looking bird, very like a roasted gondola ingulfed in a sea of “ beurre noir.”

CHAPTER III.

A qui cette belle maison et ces vastes champs ? demandait le roi, en baissant le store de la voiture. A Monseigneur le Marquis de Carabas, sire, répondirent les moissonneurs, comme le chat botté leur avait commandé de dire.
—*Histoire Célèbre du Chat Botté.*

I won’t describe ; description is my forte,
But every fool describes in these bright days
His wondrous journey to some foreign court,
And spawns his quartos, and demands your praise.
Death to his publisher, to him ’tis sport ;
While Nature, tortured twenty thousand ways,
Resigns herself with exemplary patience
To guide-books, rhymes, tours, sketches, illustrations.

LORD BYRON.

EVERY one who has passed the Simplon (and who is there that has not ?) knows, as well as I can tell them, that, let them turn to which side they will on the sunny margin of that terrestrial paradise, the Lago Maggiore, and inquire who is the happy owner of some fairy casino, from Isola Madre and Isola Bella onwards, will be sure to receive the eternal answer that it belongs to the Prince Borromeo, who is most categorically the Marquis de Carabas of “ that ilk.” How gloriously, how primevally beautiful, is just this one favoured spot ! how “ flat, stale, and unprofitable,” the plains of Lombardy beyond ! and how infernal look the red lights, that glare out the way, previous to reaching the ferry at Cesto Calende, where the poor blind fiddler with his songs of “ Bella Italia,” and “ La Placida Campagna,” seems, Orpheus-like, to move the sticks and stones of the heavily-laden ferry, and make the passage over less miserable than it otherwise would be !

But, in Italy, let no one fear a lack of discomfort ; no, no ! at every “poste” they will be sure of the eternal dogana, the large, dirty, miserable inn, and the pitched battle between the courier and the maestro della posta, about the “tariffe :” add to this, the having nothing to eat, while oneself is eaten alive, will always ensure to an Englishman his national privilege of grumbling, which, being his greatest luxury, is also, luckily, the only one that is not “contrabandista,” and therefore gets through the custom-houses duty free.

The day that Saville and Mowbray reached Milan was one of those bright, balmy, thoroughly Italian days, that make one feel very much as one fancies a chrysalis must feel when it is turning into a butterfly, and expanding into a new and happier existence ; but while Mowbray was looking to the right and to the left, as they passed the Corso, and joyfully recognising old acquaintances in every tree, Saville was as eagerly looking into every carriage, and thinking every moment an hour till they alighted at the Albergo Reale. Verily, his toilette was not of the longest, and yet the most fastidious eye could not have detected any deficiency in it, when, half an hour after their arrival, he might have been seen striding along “à pas de géant,” towards the palazzo : but, alas ! “the course of true love never did”—nor never will—“run smooth.”—To his inquiry of whether Lord De Clifford was at home, the negative reply he received did not send an ice-bolt to his heart ; but when the same answer was returned about Lady De Clifford and her sister, and, finally, when he was informed that they were gone to Lodi, were not expected back till dinner-time, and that they all dined that day at the Contessa A.’s, poor Saville looked as if, instead of this simple and very natural piece of intelligence, the porter had informed him that a price was set upon his head, and in an hour from thence it would be separated from his body.

Slowly and languidly he retraced his steps to the hotel ; and after throwing open every window in the room, ringing the bell, till he broke it, for his man Gifford, and being extremely angry at hearing he was out, though, on leaving home, he himself had told him he might go out, as he should not want him till dinner, he resorted to that usual “pis aller” of disappointed lovers,—pacing to and fro, as if in the hope of walking away from himself. He was still pursuing this unselfish but somewhat impracticable journey, when Mowbray returned to dinner.

“What, noble knight of La Mancha !” said the latter, smiling, “has thy Dulcinea persisted in stringing pearls, and turning a deaf ear to thy suit, that thou thus wearest the blanched livery of woe ?”

“Pshaw !” muttered Saville, peevishly turning upon his heel.

“Really, Mowbray, your persiflage is unbearable ; it is always so deucedly ill-timed.”

“Not so this ‘*purée à la bisque*,’” said Mowbray, as the soup made its appearance; “for I never was more hungry in my life.”

“You’re always hungry,” retorted Saville: “I thought we were not to dine till seven?”

“And it is now half-past,” said Mowbray, holding up his watch.

They sat down to table in silence. It is needless to say that Saville found the soup too salt, and too thin ; in short, that every thing that fell to his share was peculiarly and unpardonably bad ; and that he more than once expressed his surprise how Mowbray could drink glass after glass of that infernal stuff, which was much more like vinegar and water than white Hermitage. Heaven only knows when his animadversions would have ceased, had not a billet been presented to him by one of the waiters, who added,

“Monsieur, le valet de chambre de Madame la Comtesse attend votre réponse.”

The note was from Madame de A——, begging Saville and his friend to come to her box at La Scala that evening, where they would meet Lord and Lady De Clifford and Miss Neville ; the Comtesse politely adding, that she longed to make the acquaintance of so distinguished a person as Mr. Mowbray.

Saville, in replying to this simple invitation, had to write four different notes before he could return a suitable affirmative ; for he had put so many “*chères*” and so much gratitude in the four first, that even he perceived the absurdity of them ; and at length, despairing of achieving his task creditably, he pushed the inkstand over to Mowbray, saying, with an imploring voice, “My dear fellow, do just write a proper answer, will you?”

“To what ? and to whom ?” inquired Mowbray.

“Oh, ah—true ; I forgot,” said Saville. “Madame de A—— has written to ask us to go to La Scala this evening, and she wants to know you ; so do just say as if I said it for you, how ‘*charmé*’ you will be ‘*de faire la connaissance d’une personne aussi charmante et aussi aimable que Madame de A——*,’ and that we will obey her summons.”

Mowbray took the pen and did as he was desired. No sooner was the note despatched, than as if by the wand of a magician, every thing on the table seemed to be changed from execrable to excellent. Even the wine, before condemned as vinegar and water, was now pronounced to be far better than was generally to be met with at hotels ; and Gifford, in placing a timbal of macaroni before his master, apologized humbly and fearfully for its not being “*au jus*,” as he assured him he had ordered it.

“Oh, never mind,” said the all-accommodating Saville ; “I think I like it better ‘*en timballe*.’”

Mowbray burst out laughing. "What are you laughing at?" asked Saville, good-humouredly.

"Why," said Mowbray, "at the Sybarite who, ten minutes ago, was writhing at his crumpled rose-leaf, being, by the few magical words contained in this billet, converted into the stoic, whom it is not in the power of adverse fate to annoy."

The only point upon which Saville now appeared to be at all querulously inclined, was upon Mowbray not evincing equal impatience with himself to be at the opera. At length half-past nine came, and Saville declared it must be near eleven, and he would not wait a moment longer. When they arrived at La Scala, they found Madame de A——'s box empty: and as neither she nor her party came till full an hour afterwards, they had the satisfaction of seeing (and trying not to hear) "*Il Barbieri*" cruelly shorn of all its graces; for it was since the reign of *La Divina Malibran* at Milan, when thin audiences are condemned to fat voiceless *Romeos*, tame *Almavivas*, and ungraceful *Rosinas*.

"I am really very much obliged to you, Saville, for procuring me such a treat," said Mowbray.

"Oh, never mind," returned his companion; "she—I mean they, will be here presently." As he spoke, the door opened, and two of Madame de A.'s servants entered, and snuffing the candles, and arranging the cushions and pillows on the sofa, announced that the Countess and her party were coming. A few minutes after, Madame de A., Lady De Clifford, and her sister, made their appearance. Madame de A. was a middle-sized blonde, rather "embonpoint," and a very pretty woman, at that time of life when a lady never talks of other people's ages, or her own; and never uses the word "*passé*," either relatively or comparatively. Joined to the most perfect manners, she had that great charm which Italian women so rarely—so very rarely possess—"a most sweet voice." There was, in her manner, a kindness and cordiality, which, when united with perfect good-breeding, enhances the effect of the latter just as much as a warm background throws out and gives a tone to the most finished picture.

Her greetings with Saville over, she gracefully and flatteringly made the acquaintance of his friend, who, on Saville's account, had been narrowly scrutinizing Miss Neville, and few faces could better bear minute investigation. Above the middle size, she had all the dignity of height without its awkwardness; her features were small and beautifully chiseled: her eyes of the darkest hazel; her head and throat were statue-like, and her hair of that rich, satiny, nameless brown, like a hazel-nut. There was a playful expression lurking in her deep eyes, and at the corners of her saucy pouting mouth, which her friends would have called "laughter-loving," and her enemies, satirical; her conversation would have

confirmed both friends and enemies in their opinion; and her spirits were so "brilliant and light," that they might have been oppressive to others, if her manner had not been the gentlest, and her voice the softest, that ever was. So that, with all her playfulness, she gave one the idea of a gazelle chained within bounds by eider-down fetters; and her merry laugh, that rang out like a peal of silver bells, did not destroy the illusion. As she shook hands with Saville, Mowbray watched the heightened colour on her cheek, the tears that filled her eyes, and the happy agitation of her manner, and almost envied him his bondage, as much as Saville had envied him his liberty at Geneva; nor was this feeling lessened, when, on Saville's presenting him to Fanny, she intuitively put out her hand to him, and then looked so provokingly beautiful as she stammered out an apology, about Mr. Saville being such an old friend of hers, that she fancied his friends must also be hers.

"If Miss Neville will but continue to think so," said Mowbray, "much as I have always owed to Saville's friendship, I shall now be more his debtor than ever."

Among Fanny Neville's numerous perfections was that of never giggling herself out of a compliment. So that in the present instance she neither simpered nor blushed; but said playfully to Mowbray,

"Well, then, Mr. Mowbray, you must let me begin our friendship by laying you under an obligation to me,—that of introducing you to my sister. Lady De Clifford, Mr. Mowbray."

"I see," said Mowbray, bowing, "you have maliciously determined that the obligation shall be eternal."

Lady De Clifford was taller than her sister; her beauty was altogether of a different kind: her head, and the manner in which it was placed upon her shoulders, was quite as classical as Fanny's; but then the contour was more that of Juno than of Psyche. Her features, too, were small, yet perfect; a little—a very little less Greek than her sister's, but more piquant, with a nose that I can only describe by calling it epigrammatic: it could not have belonged to a fool, or even to a dull person. There was something queen-like about her, but then it was her air only; for though dazzling was the word every one felt inclined to apply to her appearance, yet she had quite as much prettiness as beauty; that is, she had all the feminine delicacy and fascination of a merely pretty woman, with all the dignity and splendour of a perfectly beautiful one. In short, prettiness might be said to be the detail of her features, and beauty their effect. Her eyes were "darkly, deeply, beautifully blue," and the long dark fringes that shadowed them gave a Murillo-like softness to her cheek when she looked down; her complexion would have been too brilliant, had it not changed

almost as often as the rose clouds in an Italian sky; for it varied as though each passing thought reflected its shadow upon her face;—her mouth and teeth would have baffled the imagination of a painter, or the description of a poet; and her smile was bright,

“Like any fair lake that the breeze is upon,
When it breaks into dimples and laughs in the sun.”

To the greatest strength of character she united the mildest disposition, and withal was what her sex so rarely are, “though witty, wise.” Few women could boast her solid and almost universal information, yet there was nothing of the “*précieuse*” about her—no attempt at display—no contempt for the ignorance of others; in short, good sense did for her manners what religion did for her character—blent, purified, and harmonized each separate or opposing quality, without the main springs ever ruggedly or obtrusively appearing to taunt others with their lack of them. Mowbray had been so pre-occupied with Fanny, that he had not at first remarked Lady De Clifford; but, now that his attention was especially called to her, he felt himself gazing at her almost rudely, for never before had he seen any thing that he thought so wondrously beautiful; and a minute or two elapsed in taking the chair Madame de A. offered him between Lady De Clifford and herself, before he recollected himself sufficiently to speak to either of them. At length, pitying Fanny and Saville, who by no means appeared to enjoy the dead silence that had ensued, he commenced playing the agreeable (which none could do more successfully) to his two fair companions. He listened to Madame de A., but he was perfectly “*entrainé*” by every thing Lady de Clifford said; every word appeared to him epigrammatic; and yet, had he been asked to instance a single good thing she said, he could not have done it. But certain it is, that some persons have the art of giving to the merest commonplaces an interest and a novelty of expression, that others might despair of imparting to the most original ideas; and this art she possessed in no ordinary degree. It is astonishing how the wish to please ensures success; about the only wish, alas! that does ensure its own fulfilment, and therefore I marvel that it is not a more universal one. This wish, in the present instance, was Mowbray’s, and its success was proportionate to its sincerity: he even suddenly remembered that he had once had a great friendship for a person, whose existence he had for some time most unaccountably forgotten,—a stupid young man, a Mr. Pierpoint, who had been a brother paper-spoiler with him some seven years ago, at the embassy, at Vienna, a cousin of Lady De Clifford’s. The virtues, talents, and amiable qualities, of this young gentleman, he now began to recapitulate, or rather to manufacture to his fair cousin.

“Poor George!” said Lady De Clifford, smiling, “I am sure he

never had so warm an admirer before. How grateful he ought to be to you, Mr. Mowbray."

Mowbray, who felt conscious that George Pierpont in reality possessed but the one merit he had just discovered, namely, that of being cousin to Lady De Clifford, felt a slight sense of the ridiculous, "*et pour se tirer d'affaire*," thought he had better continue the catalogue of their mutual friends; and therefore mentioned another diplomatic effigy, Mr. Grimstone, a brother of Lord De Clifford's.

Lady De Clifford did more than smile at Mowbray's anecdotes of him; but in the midst of their mirth the door opened, and the Comte de A. and Lord De Clifford entered. There is no need of describing the poor comte; indeed it would be no easy task, as he amounted to what all Italian and French husbands do—a mere cipher. Lord De Clifford was a perpendicular, stately personage, aspiring towards seven feet: he gave one the idea of never even in sleep having been guilty of an easy position: the vulgar term of "he looks as if he had swallowed a poker," was completely exemplified in his appearance. He had straight, stiff, and obstinate (very obstinate) brown hair; very small, light, gray eyes; a nose so aquiline, that if it had appeared on paper, instead of on a human face, would have been pronounced a caricature; his upper lip was straight, and of that inordinate length which may be taken as the affidavit of the face to the obstinacy of the owner's character. It is, after this, perhaps, unnecessary to add that he always wore a blue coat and gilt buttons of an evening, with a huge and very white stiff cravat, that looked cut out of stone, after the Tam O'Shanter order of sculpture.

Nature seemed to have given him a sort of rag-bag of a mind, made up of the strangest and most incongruous odds and ends possible, with a clumsy kind of arrogance of all-work to arrange it, that was continually adding to its confusion;—his information, such as it was, (though he aimed at the universal,) might be compared to the "*Penny Cyclopædia*" printed upside down; and the curious and gigantic pomposity with which he dealt out the smallest and most common-place fact reminded one of an elephant, with mighty effort, bowing out its trunk to pick up a pin's head or a piece of thread. Among his mass of information, geology of course had not been neglected; and having heard at school, or elsewhere, that, did the world lose but the smallest atom of its gravity, it would be at an end, he always seemed impressed with the idea that he was the important atom on which its existence depended; and also was of opinion that so great a man should be governed by the same principles as the universe, and therefore took care never to lose an atom of his own gravity; for which reason, strange to say, he was never known to catch the infection when

others were laughing at him. In politics he was an ultra-Liberal (it gives more scope for declamation); in private life (as in the general pendant to public liberality) he was a tyrannical autocrat, a Caligula in his clemency, and a Draco in his displeasure: whatever appertained to him was always the best and most faultless in the world—all, excepting his wife: she was not of his immediate stock,—merely a graft, which accounted for all her faults; that, among the rest, of his never being able (incessantly as he impressed it on her) to get her to feel and appreciate her wonderful good fortune in being wedded to him, which was the more extraordinary, as she had left the nursery at her mother's commands to marry him: not but what Lady De Clifford was, in thought, word, and deed, what any other man would have considered perfection for a wife; but then, for such superhuman merits as his, what could be good enough? Still it might have puzzled even him to find a real fault in her; for had she to her other rare qualities added the rarest of all, that of being able to adore him, she could not have anticipated, and prevented, and studied every wish of his, with more scrupulous devotion and delicacy than she did. This his selfishness could not help feeling, though his heart, or his memory, never recollected it, or he could not have subjugated her so completely to the surveillance, interference, and petty tyranny of every member of his family, as he did. But then they were his family, and consequently must know better about every thing, from the dressing of a child to the drowning of a puppy, than any wife could possibly do. Not that he did not, imbruted as he was, see his wife's superiority—for no one could, when occasion required, make more use of her talents: but then he liked to try and make his family, the world, and especially herself, believe that she was as ignorant and inferior as, according to his opinions, every woman ought to be. After Lord De Clifford had made one of his stiffest bows to Mowbray, and as stiffly shaken Saville by the hand, he inflicted himself upon poor Madame de A., making commonplace observations upon the opera, in bad French and worse Italian, till even she was wearied out of her good-breeding into exclaiming, “*Mais, mon Dieu! milord, parlez Anglais, et je tâcherai de vous comprendre.*” Meanwhile, Mowbray and Lady De Clifford had resumed their conversation, and the name of Grimstone reaching his ear, accompanied by a slight laugh, he turned to his sposa, and inquired, with an angry frown, and a sneering smile that made an awkward attempt to neutralize it,

“Are you speaking of my brother?”

Lady De Clifford crimsoned to her very temples, and in the greatest confusion stammered out, “No—yes—that is, Mr. Mowbray was talking about my giddy cousin, George Pierpoint, and your brother whom he also met at Vienna.”

Mowbray was at a loss to conceive what the necessity of this evident embarrassment and equivocation could be, as he had merely been recording Mr. Herbert Grimstone's awful importance whenever a courier was going out, and it was necessary to make up a bag, whether of ladies' letters and commissions, or of circular negatives from the "corps diplomatique" to their English duns; but certain it was she had equivocated in the most undeniable manner; for at the moment, and indeed for some time before, there had been no mention of Pierpoint's name. Then why denounce him to her husband as being *the* subject of their conversation? It was strange — it was passing strange! Could one so gifted, so amiable as she appeared (and on whose countenance candour itself seemed to have set her seal)—could she be guilty of art, of subterfuge, nay, almost of positive want of truth? It would be impossible to describe the painful revulsion that took place in Mowbray's feelings as he asked himself these questions. "Fool!" said he, as he felt his cheek flushing and his pulse beating quickly, "and what is it to me if she is all that's artful, all that's bad? And yet, why, oh! why are we thus to be eternally disappointed in all earthly things? why, when we no sooner find flowers more fair, more fresh, more bright than others, must we at the same time discover that 'the trail of the serpent is over them all?'"

There is no knowing how long he might have moralized within himself, had not his reverie been broken in upon by the silver voice of Lady De Clifford asking him to reach her shawl, as the ballet was over: that voice, so low, so soft, so touching, seemed to his heated imagination like that of an angel pronouncing a pitying absolution upon his sin, in having for a moment doubted its divinity. He folded the shawl almost reverentially, and, in placing it on her shoulders, he did it as gently as though one rough movement would have been sacrilege; nor did he venture to offer his arm till he perceived there was no one else left to do so; and then quickly and silently they followed the rest of the party down stairs: he placed his fair charge in the carriage without even saying "good night;" nor was he roused to a sense of this omission, till the sonorous pomposity of Lord De Clifford's voice, asking him to accompany Saville to dinner at his house on the following day, enabled him to accept the invitation, and make his adieus at the same time. No sooner was he seated in his own carriage, than Saville turned round, and joyously exclaimed,

"Well, Mowbray, what do you think of her? Did I say too much?"

"Think of her!" said Mowbray: "what can any one think but that she is an angel, as far as outward appearance goes—but—but"—

"But what?" interrupted Saville; "for Heaven's sake, Mowbray, what do you mean?"

Mowbray, ashamed to find that he had not been answering his friend's question, but recurring to Lady De Clifford's evasion, felt heartily ashamed, both of his selfishness and his suspicion, and turned off the disqualifying *but* that had so alarmed poor Saville into—

“But I was going to say, Harry, when you interrupted me, that I think it a pity you should put yourself in the way of so much temptation, unless there is some chance of your father's consent.”

“Oh! as to that,” said Saville, who was too happy to be critical upon the probabilities of the latter being Mowbray's original—
“*but* as to that, you know, by my uncle Cecil's will, I am to inherit what he left me at seven-and-twenty—that I shall be in two years—and abroad we can do very well on two thousand a-year—only the worst of it is, two years is a devil of a time to wait.”

Mowbray drank more hock and soda-water that night than would have quenched the thirst of twenty fevers; and Saville declared it was too hot to think of bed those three hours, and therefore talked incessantly of Fanny—Mowbray to all appearance listened most attentively; never once interrupting him, and only nodding assent to every perfection he accused her of. When at length they retired for the night, sleep seemed as far from them as ever. Saville was too happy, and in too much anticipation of happiness, to sleep; and Mowbray had such an innate love of truth, that he kept turning and twisting Lady De Clifford's dereliction from it in every possible and impossible form, till the cathedral clock tolled five; when turning round, and flinging the pillow from him, he lulled himself to sleep with his opera interrogation—“and what is it to me if she is all that's artful, and all that's bad?”

CHAPTER IV.

Let no man on his first falling in with the devil, evince towards him a forbearing civility, lest, like unto a maiden's importunate lover, he construe it into a secret yearning himwards. For the devil, like his pupil man, is a vain devil—and it taketh much to disconcert him with himself, or despair him of success:—therefore, at the onset, say thou “Get thee behind me, Satan,” lest from encouragement no bigger than a midge's egg, he (like all low knaves courting the acquaintanceship of their superiors) in a short time get too fast hold on thee—for all thy strength to shuffle him off,—and so he end by riding rough-shod over thy soul.—FRANCIS FLOWERDALE.

It was late the next morning before Mowbray came down to breakfast, and he found that Saville had been gone out some time to the palazzo. His first impulse was to follow him thither; but on reflection, he thought it would appear obtrusive, and moreover, the great desire he felt to do so convinced him (as he walked up and down the room in a state of wavering deliberation) that it would

be better he did not. "No, no," said he, snatching up his hat; "as I am to dine there, that is enough." Yet, thought he, I should like to see if it is possible that she can look as well of a morning as she does at night; and if she does, or does not, what is that to me? Nothing—absolutely nothing: and the short bitter laugh that followed the mental answer he had given to his own thoughts, left Mowbray persuaded that he had bullied himself into a state of most noble and heroic indifference about Lady De Clifford, and indeed every thing else in the world; and clearing the stairs "*à trois pas*," he walked slowly on towards the cathedral. "By the by," thought he, "I may as well go and pay my old friend San Carlos, of Borromeo, a visit, and see if time has robbed him of any more features." He entered the church, and walked on, till he met a sacristan to conduct him down to the golden and gorgeous chapel that contains the saint's mortal remains; but on removing the outer case of the crystal coffin, the body appeared just the same as it had done some ten years before, the nose being the only feature that had taken its solitary departure.—"And even the most beautiful will come to this, only much sooner!" said Mowbray aloud in English, and he sighed as he said it: his sigh was more than echoed by one so low, deep, and sepulchral, that he would have almost fancied it had proceeded from the coffin before him, had not the words "*è vero—vero*," accompanied the sigh, as if in assent to his soliloquy. He turned in every direction to ascertain from whence the sigh and the words had proceeded, but could perceive no one; the sacristan smiled, and shrugging his shoulders, said, "*O signor, questa qualca povero diavolo che fa la sua penitenza*;" but Mowbray only became more puzzled to imagine how a poor Italian sinner performing his penance could understand English sufficiently to reply to his remark. In ascending the staircase that led into the body of the church, he looked all about, but could see no one save a stray woman here and there, with her high Spanish-looking comb and long black or white veil, saying her beads, but at too great a distance to have responded to his exclamation at the tomb of San Carlos;—to be sure, there were confessionals in all directions, and the sighs or ejaculations of their tenants might easily have descended through the grating into the chapel. Still it was a strange coincidence, and Mowbray could not help pondering upon it as he walked through the sunny and French-looking streets of Milan. There is something French, too, in the air of the Milanese themselves; and then the "*passages, cafés, and restaurants*," of every street look so Parisian, as to make one fancy, that after the carnage and desolation of Lodi, Pavia, and Binasco, the French, by way of atonement (and they no doubt would consider it an ample one for any aggression), must have inoculated Milan with Paris.

After Mowbray had sauntered about for an hour or two with

most murderous designs upon time (who, by the by, of all tyrants is the most difficult to assassinate), the thought struck him that every one in all probability would be at the Corso, and why should he not be there too?

Accordingly, inquiring the shortest way to the Albergo Reale, he ordered his horse, and galloped thither with as much velocity as Napoleon may have been supposed to have done, when he went to plant his adventurous cannon at the Bridge of Lodi.

What a happy, gay-looking place, that said Corso is, with its nice English-looking equipages! the horses suited to the carriages, and the carriages to the horses, and the servants to both, without one iota of the shabby and fanciful discrepancies that generally distinguish a continental turn-out!

As Mowbray, who had now slackened his pace, was riding leisurely along, his horse was a little startled by Prince setting off full speed, and barking with delight.

"What is the matter with the dog?" asked Mowbray, turning to the groom.

"He sees Mr. Saville, sir, out yonder," was the reply.

"Where?" asked Mowbray.

"By them 'ere trees, sir, at the *fur side*, riding with a lady and gentleman."

Again the flanks of Mowbray's horse had the full benefit of his spurs, and in a few minutes he had joined the party, which proved to be Miss Neville, Lord De Clifford, and Saville.

"Is that your dog, Mr. Mowbray?" asked Fanny: "what a beautiful creature! Julia must see it; she dotes on dogs."

"She has a vast deal too many dogs already," growled Lord De Clifford, "and there is no use in encouraging her propensity for them."

"Lady De Clifford is not here, is she?" inquired Mowbray.

"Yes; I believe she's driving with my mother, at least I desired her to come here; so I conclude that she has," said the noble lord, drawing up with his most husbandly and authoritative air.

The words "*I desired* her to come here," tingled strangely in Mowbray's ear. "Good heavens!" thought he, "does he play the despot even in such trifles?" A feeling of sickening disgust stole over him, which, strange to say, was accompanied with a determination to insinuate himself as much as possible into Lord de Clifford's good graces, by showing that sort of deferential homage to his pomposity which he seemed to demand from every one. So he contented himself with replying,

"Oh! then of course she is here." The "lurking devil" he detected at the corner of Fanny's eye might have endangered his gravity had he not taken refuge in admiring Lord De Clifford's mare.

“A beautiful creature that of yours,” said Mowbray.

“Yes, she is ; I had great difficulty in getting her—her dam was out of Austerlitz, the celebrated charger of Maréchal B. ; and the sire to Austerlitz was grandson to Sultan, the Arabian that Napoleon rode at the battle of Marengo.”

“Oh ! cheval illustre d'un âne peu renommé,” said Fanny, in a stage whisper.

“Here is Lady De Clifford,” said her amiable husband, as he rode up to the carriage, and addressed the following endearing interrogatory to her :

“Why, what the d—l has kept you so late?”

“Julia’s Italian master was late, and I did not like to leave her at home, so I waited for her,” said Lady De Clifford.

“Lady de Clifford of course knows best, but I thought it a pity,” interposed the dowager, who strikingly resembled a withered crab-apple, gifted with a parrot’s beak and tongue, “for a walk would have been much better for the child, and we should not have lost the finest part of the day. Pretty dear, hold up your head.”

“Oh ! but papa,” said the child, “I begged of mamma to stay for me, so that it is all my fault.”

“You should learn, Julia,” replied the affectionate father, “when I give an order to obey it.”

“Yes, I know that,” said the child, hanging down her head ; and then brushing away the tears that stood in her eyes, she threw her arms round her mother’s neck, and said, “Dear mamma, I’m so sorry I asked you to stay for me, but I will never do so again.”

During this little scene, Mowbray had full time to ascertain to his perfect satisfaction that Lady de Clifford, if possible, looked more beautiful of a morning than at night ; but he had no sooner arrived at this desirable conclusion, than the current of his thoughts was interrupted by Lord De Clifford’s begging to introduce him to his mother. Mowbray bowed, and that was all he could do, for there are persons to whom it is quite impossible to say any thing, and her ladyship was one of them ; but pitying what she considered his diffidence, she kindly undertook “*de faire les frais*” of the conversation ; and so beating down from the opposite seat of the carriage two little Blenheim dogs of her daughter-in-law’s, began it by saying she was “*vaustly*” fond of dogs in general.

“I dare say, Mr. Mowbray, you are quite shocked at seeing so many dogs ; it quite spoils one’s drive, makes the carriage look like a dog omnibus, disarranges one’s dress, and destroys one’s comfort. Those two Blenheims are horridly snappish ; Zoe, the greyhound, is rather more good-humoured, but so frightfully frolicsome, she keeps one’s nerves in a continual flutter ; it is a thousand pities Lady De Clifford has such a mania for dogs. Look at that creature’s tail, how it’s going ! positively perpetual motion.”

When her ladyship had concluded this eloquent piece of alliteration, Mowbray ventured to take Lady De Clifford's part, by confessing his own fondness for dogs. "Indeed," said he, "I have a dog that I am so proud of, that I should have introduced him to you: but after your philippic against the present company, I dare not."

"Oh! dear," said the amiable lady, "I have no objection to dogs in their proper place; quite the contrary."

I have remarked that this assertion about liking dogs in their proper place, old maids and servant-maids seem to consider as the test of a moral and well-regulated mind.

"Is that your dog?" asked Lady De Clifford, pointing to Prince, who sat panting with his tongue out and his ears up, by the side of his master's horse. "What a dear dog!—do make him put his paws up on the carriage."

"Prince! Prince! come here, sir!" and Prince took Waller's advice to Sacharissa, that is "came forth, and suffered himself to be admired."

"Very fine beast, indeed," said the dowager, patronisingly.

"Oh! Zoo nice dog," said Lady De Clifford, kissing its head.

"Oh! you lucky dog," said Mowbray, as he pushed him down.

Lord De Clifford began to lower, and issued a proclamation that, after they had taken another turn, it would be time to go home and dress for dinner. Mowbray and Saville took the hint, and saying "au revoir," galloped away.

When Saville and Mowbray arrived at Lord De Clifford's, they found the Comte and Contessa A., Comte C., a Mr. and Mrs. Seymour, and a young French dandy, a Monsieur de Rivoli, who did not seem to have made up his mind which he should be most vain of, himself or his English; though, of course, had it come to a ballot, he would have given a casting vote for himself, as he *was* French.

"Dinner, directly," said Lord De Clifford, in that loud, ill-bred voice, which gives the last arrival fully to understand how late they are.

"Do you know the Comte C.?" inquired he, turning to Mowbray.

"Yes, I had the pleasure of meeting him in England."

"Ah! how you do, my dear fellow?" said the comte, extending his hand.

"I see," said Mowbray, "you pay us the compliment of keeping up your English."

"Oh! we are all English at Milan: you know we have an Anglomania," said the comte, who really spoke English remarkably well for an Italian.

"What ver great heat he is to-day," observed Monsieur de Rivoli to Lady De Clifford, with the intention of outshining Comte C.;

and then, turning to Fanny, for fear she should be jealous of his devoting himself to her sister, for a Frenchman not only possesses an amiable fear of inflicting pain on the "beau sexe," but imagines himself a sort of Achilles' spear, which can alone heal the wounds it inflicts, said to her,

"But, what has arrive to you, Miss Neville, dat I no see you on de Corso to-day?"

"Rather let me ask you that question," replied Fanny, laughing; "for I was there for two hours."

"But, no! he is not possibel, and I no see you. Ah!" continued he, grasping the side curls of his hair, "it is my bad habitude, 'de rêver, comment dites-vous cela?' of the reflection."

There is no knowing how many sad consequences Monsieur de Rivoli might have instanced of the effects of his habit of deep thinking, had not dinner been announced.

Comte C. gave his arm to Lady De Clifford, Saville secured Fanny, and as Mowbray fell to the share of Mrs. Seymour, and Lord De Clifford, "en règle," took out Madame de A. Monsieur de Rivoli was interrupted in the paternal petting he was bestowing upon his mustaches, to find that the Fates had decreed for him their likeness, the dowager Lady De Clifford; and he had only time "mentally to exclaim," as the heroes and heroines of the Minerva press have it, "Ah! la pauvre petite Fanni, c'est fâcheux par exemple ce contre-temps!" ere he felt the dowager's skinny arm closely linked in his.

At dinner, Mowbray found himself next to Lady De Clifford; and he fancied, as the light shone full on her face, that her eyes looked red, as if she had been crying.

"I fear you are not well?" said he, in a low voice which appeared more anxious than the occasion required.

"I am quite well," said she, smiling; "only a slight headach from the heat."

"Saville," said Lord De Clifford, "try that Johannesberg; it is some my brother sent me. I think," continued he to Mowbray, "you knew my brother at Vienna?"

"Yes," said the latter, "we had many merry days there together."

Lord De Clifford looked surprised—as surprised at his coupling the word merry with his brother's name, as if he had asserted that he had passed many merry days at the *Morgue*.

"I remember," recommenced Mowbray, "that he was always in a great state of mind, whenever"—

"Mr. Mowbray," said Lady De Clifford, interrupting him with such "empressement" as showed that she evidently wished to deter him from saying whatever he was going to say about her brother-in-law,—"Mr. Mowbray, do you know that Madame A. is going to give a 'bal costumé,' and all the dresses are

to be from the different epochs of Italian history; and we are to have all the Italian painters and poets, so that we have been studying Sismondi for the last week; and I think of going as Johanna, Queen of Naples, dressed after the picture of her; and I want Fanny to go as Laura, and Mr. Saville must make the best Petrarch he can." As she finished this rapid recital, she laughed almost hysterically.

Mowbray was so lost in thought, that he scarcely heard any thing but her last words, and was a minute or two before he could make any reply. "Good heavens!" thought he, "that eternal man! what can her objection be to his name being mentioned at least to her husband? I would give any thing on earth to fathom this mystery; and yet what is it to me?" This question recalled him to the necessity of making some answer to what Lady De Clifford had been saying, and repeating with a mechanical and abstracted air,

"Johanna, Queen of Naples! and is Lord De Clifford going as Prince Andrew?" and, as he asked this, Mowbray sent his quick penetrating eyes into her very soul. She appeared offended at the question, and colouring slightly, said rather haughtily,

"It is not necessary to keep the unities at a fancy ball, and as most women have no characters at all, I do not feel bound, '*faute de mieux*,' to take upon me Johanna's, although I am inclined to believe Petrarch and Boccaccio—especially the latter—that it was a very excellent one."

How awkward the sense of having wounded the feelings of another makes one! It is the conviction of how contemptible we must appear in their eyes, that prevents us readily placing ourselves in a better light. Mowbray would have given the world to have unsaid what he had said, or to have atoned for it; but he felt both equally impossible. In this embarrassment, some street music began playing the Duc de Reichstadt's waltz. Lady de Clifford, feeling for his confusion, turned to him with one of her most open and sunny smiles, and said,

"I am so fond of that waltz! Is it not pretty?"

"Pretty!" said Mowbray, thinking of and looking at her; "it is beautiful—perfectly beautiful—it is angelic!"

"Come," said she laughing, "you are determined not to offend me, by not agreeing with me, or sufficiently admiring what I admire."

Mowbray was now plunged into fresh confusion at the idea of how absurd and exaggerated his answer must have appeared to her, and never felt more grateful in his life than when Monsieur de Rivoli brought the eyes and attention of every one upon him, by exclaiming aloud, "Ah, le pauvre Duc de Reichstadt!" and then launching out into a hyperbolical eulogium on his father. The fact is, the little man could make nothing of her dowagership, and thought

himself completely lost in being “*accroché*” to her, and therefore determined that the rest of the party should no longer be losers by her monopoly of what she did not appear to benefit by, namely, his delightful conversation; and as a Frenchman is never at a loss for a great man to associate himself with, he instantly put himself “*en scène*” with Napoleon.

“Yes,” said Lord De Clifford, with as great emphasis as if it had been the first time the discovery and the assertion had been made,—“Yes, he certainly was a great—a very great man.”

“I cannot conceive,” said Mrs. Seymour, “how Marie Louise, after having been united to such a man, could have a lover, and that too before his death, and while he was in exile.”

“Ah, bah, bah!” exclaimed Monsieur de Rivoli: “Croyez-vous, Madame, que parce qu’une femme a épousé un grand homme, elle doit perdre son temps?”

At the conclusion of the universal laugh that followed this noble defence of the ex-empress, Lady De Clifford rose to go into the drawing-room; and as she passed her husband, Mowbray saw his eyes glare sternly and angrily upon his wife; nor was his surprise diminished when he heard him say to her, “I think, madam, it is not very decorous of my wife to laugh at such indelicate jests.”

“Good heavens!” thought Mowbray, “how can she keep her temper with such a tyrannical brute!” He looked at her with a feeling of compassion that was quite painful; but the only expression he saw on her countenance was one of mingled wounded pride and endurance—there was no resentment, open or suppressed.

When Monsieur De Rivoli had “*débarrassé*” himself of the dowager, by depositing her in a “*bergère*,” and when he had passed half an hour “*en faisant l’aimable*” to Madame de A., and telling her how she ought to manage her “*bal costumé*,” he began tumbling over all the books on the table, and took up an English edition of the “*Sorrows of Werter*.”

“Ah, ha! my old friend Verter,” said he, and slapping his forehead, continued—“*je me souviens du temps quand je ne faisais la moindre démarche sans mes pistolets dans une poche et Verter dans l’autre. Mais ce printemps de la vie, cet été de l’âme, est passé; la sagesse a mis fin au bonheur, comme elle fait toujours!*”

“It is,” said Lord De Clifford pompously, “a masterpiece, like every thing Goëthe ever wrote!” and he looked round for admiration and gratitude for having enlightened his audience; but suppressed laughter was all that greeted him, and Saville good-naturedly wishing to take the sins of the whole party on his own shoulders, ventured boldly on a hearty laugh, and a stout dissent from his lordship’s oracular opinion.

“Why, as to that,” said he, “it certainly has the merit of origi-

nality, and the good fortune to be in no danger of ever being copied; it might fairly be entitled 'Goëthe's Fornarina.' It is a regular bread and butter epic—the unities are all kept in bread and butter—the weapons of love and destruction are still bread and butter—his friendship—his philanthropy, is all carried on through the medium of these mighty implements. To wit," continued Saville, opening the book: "in writing to his friend, he says, 'but not to keep you in suspense, I will detail what happened as I eat my bread and butter!'—Again, at page 18, describing the peasant's children, and informing his friend of his overflowing benevolence in giving each of them a 'cruetzer' every Sunday, he gives a still further instance of his generosity, by adding, 'and at night they partake of my bread and butter!' Now, considering how fondly and faithfully he appears to have been attached to bread and butter, this was indeed true generosity. Again, who is there that does not remember the pathetic and beautiful description of the first interview with Charlotte, at page 21? This contains more, and most bread and butter of all. 'For,' says he, 'she had a brown loaf in her hand, and was cutting slices of bread and butter, which she distributed in a graceful and affectionate manner to the children, according to their age and appetite.'—And, finally, in the last fatal scene that closes all, after he had kissed the pistols which Charlotte had dusted, we are told that he only drank one glass of wine (though he had ordered a pint), and ate one slice of bread and butter, ere he committed the rash act! Is not this, my friends, a true epic? and ought it not to be called the 'Bread and Buttersey?'"

Every one laughed much at Saville's harangue, except Lord De Clifford, who, drawing himself up pompously, said "Ridicule is not argument."

"Fanny, love," said poor Lady De Clifford, seeing that a storm was brewing upon her sposo's brow, "do sing something."

"I have no voice to-night," said Fanny, "and really cannot."

"Do, dearest!" whispered Saville, imploringly.

"Ah, Mademoiselle, je vous en prie, pour me plaire," said Monsieur de Rivoli, with his hands up.

"Pour vous plaire," said Fanny, laughing: "Je ferais des impossibilités—si c'était possible—mais"—

"Vraiment," said Madame de A., "vous ressemblez beaucoup au Comte d'Erfeuil, qui disait à Corinne: Belle Corinne, parlez français; vous en êtes vraiment digne."

"Eh bien oui," said the Frenchman, not choosing to stand in the ridiculous position Madame de A.'s application had placed him: "Cela veut dire que Mademoiselle Neville ressemble à Corinne."

"For my part," said the dowager, sotto voce, "I do not think any singing worth so much asking for."

"Very just observation, my dear madam," said her son, "I am quite of your opinion;" and then added, "Come, Fanny, cannot you go and sing at once without all this fuss?"

"I do not choose to sing to-night," said Fanny, shortly.

"Well," said her sister, going good-humouredly to the piano, as she saw something must be done, to keep off the impending storm on her husband's brow; "I will be revenged upon you, for I'll sing a song that somebody wrote a short time ago. Mr. Saville, have the goodness to reach me that little book of manuscript music."

"Julia! Julia! pray!" said Fanny, stretching out her hand for the book: but her sister had played the prelude, and Saville held the book fast, while Lady De Clifford sang the following

SONG.

As light o'er the waters breaking,
 So my spirit's gladden'd by thee;
 Thou art my dream, and when waking,
 Life is but one long thought of thee.
 What is joy but to be near thee?
 And grief but to know thee away?
 And music—oh! 'tis to hear thee,
 For my heart is the lute thou dost play.
 Like Æol's harp, when forsaken
 By the breeze to which its soul clings,
 No other spell can awaken
 The sound of its desolate strings:
 So no other voice, love, but thine,
 From my heart soft echoes e'er stole;
 Its tones, like deep passion-flowers, twine
 Around ev'ry thought of my soul.
 Oh! love, must thy buds ever fade,
 Unless they be water'd with tears?
 Is thine immortality made
 Alone by thy sighs and thy fears?
 If so, then in poison still steep
 The arrows girded about thee:
 With thee it is dearer to weep,
 Than to be happy without thee!

"And did Fanny write that?" said Saville, in a low voice to her sister, when she had ceased singing.

Lady De Clifford nodded assent.

"Do n't believe her," said Fanny, blushing, as she snatched the book away from Saville.

"What a divine voice!" thought Mowbray; "and how lovely she looks when she is singing! It gives one the idea of the spirit of music having hid itself in the ambush of a rose, and sending out every note perfumed by its leaves."

That night Mowbray resolved he would leave Milan the next

day; and well for him would it have been if he had kept to that resolution; but, for a month after, he was a daily visiter at the palazzo. It is true, it was at the especial invitation of its master—oh! the sophistry of the human heart, when it tries, but in vain, to deceive itself! Then comes the alchymy of false reasoning, that turns its blackest dross to that seeming gold, which ends in its own destruction, when we find that we have wasted life, hope, salvation, on a dream—a wild, a troubled, an infatuated dream. Mowbray would not own, even to himself, that he loved Lady De Clifford; for he thought that would be almost as much an infringement upon her purity, as though he had dared to tell her so. Fool! is not the heart its own author? and cannot it read its own meaning, whatever be the misprints we try to put upon it? There was a new existence for him: for the first time he lived in the present; the past he could not think of, the future he would not—all nature was changed—the air had a balm, the sky a brightness, and the commonest occurrence an interest, which, for him, they had never had before; for she breathed that air,—she saw that sky,—and each little incident that occurred to him related more or less to her; and if at times he saw more plainly than at others the precipice on which he stood, he would hoodwink himself with the reflection that she would never be injured; therefore, what matter how he suffered? Besides, he asked, wished, dreamt no greater happiness, than to see, to hear her; and, as long as she never knew the happiness her presence gave him, where could the harm be? No human being knew it, or ever should know it; and surely it was not because she was all that was beautiful, all that was good, that she was to be the only person whom he was not to feel a friendship for.—“False philosophy, and vain reasoning, all!”—Let that man beware how he forms a friendship for a married woman, whose first feeling towards her is admiration, and his next compassion!

CHAPTER V.

J'avais près de vingt ans, mon père voulait me marier; et c'est ici que toute la fatalité de mon sort va se déployer.—CORINNE.

WHEN Lady De Clifford was little more than seventeen, her father happened to win 1000*l.* on the St. Leger, from Lord De Clifford; and though he had no great liking for the man, he had a certain respect for his fortune; as he justly considered that the father of three daughters, however beautiful they were, ought not to be fastidious about the agreeability or amiability of any man who had a rent-roll of 8000*l.* a-year. Accordingly, before he left Doncaster, he gave him a pressing invitation to come and see him when he returned to town in the ensuing spring.

Mr. Neville was an old aboriginal Whig, who persevered in a spencer, a liveried groom, and top-boots, to the last; and lived quite as much in *the* window at Brooks's as he did at his house in Berkeley-square, where a profuse but shabby expenditure (which constitute the true whig ménage), year after year, involved him more deeply; but of this he thought little, as long as his house was the focus of agreeability. But your true whig of the old stock, who has drunk with Sheridan, debated with Fox, and written sonnets to the Duchess of Devonshire, is somewhat sceptical as to the agreeability, talents, patriotism, or beauty of any other class, clique, or coterie in the world, and therefore pertinaciously adheres to the L.'s, R.'s, S.'s., H.'s, and M.'s, as the only people worth listening to, or looking at in the world: thus following the Egyptian fashion of honouring the mummy, when the man is no more. Mr. Neville's house was an epitome of himself: the faded carpets, the shabby chintz curtains, the small glasses, the gilt-wood be-balled and be-chained candelabras — the small faded buff ottomans, with their black glazed calico à la grecque borders—the narrow dim grates, with their still dimmer fire-irons and fenders; the small pillory-looking white and gilt arm-chairs; the Procrustes bed of sofas; the unpowdered and drab-coated servants, with their nankeen small-clothes, expensive silk stockings, and ill-made shoes; the buff-waistcoated, and pepper-and-salt-trouserer butler; the red-curtained dining-room, with its red-morocco chairs and its dark unpolished tables,—all looked just as they had done some five-and-thirty years before, when Pitt taxed and Napoleon fought. In private as well as in political life, he invariably had recourse to the grand whig principle of expediency and half measures. His cook was a bad man and an habitual drunkard, but an incomparable cook; so he kept him on, compromising the matter by giving him a “carte blanche,” for drinking *after* dinner. He was the most bland and kindest husband and father in the world, as far as *words* went, and left nothing undone to promote the happiness of his wife or his children, except putting himself out of the way; consequently, whenever the former asked him for money, his invariable answer was, “My dear love, I really do n't know where to turn for a hundred pounds in the world just now; but pray get whatever you want at Howell's and Maradan's, and they can send me in the bills at Christmas; and for Heaven's sake, mind that you and the girls do n't deprive yourselves of any thing.” In like manner he allowed his sons to draw upon him; so no wonder that the credit side of his banker's book always presented an alarming aspect, and that poor Mr. Neville was truly an embarrassed man! It was one day coming out of Hammersley's, in no very happy frame of mind, that he again met Lord De Clifford; he asked him if he would dine with him, and go to the play with Mrs. Neville and the girls, in the even-

ing. The invitation was accepted, and at dinner he appeared much struck with the beauty of Julia Neville. Her mother perceived it, and, though her original intention had been that she should not come out for two years — (Whigesses always make their “début” later than other girls),—she now changed her plan, and determined that Julia should go to Almack’s on the following Wednesday, with which determination she took care, carelessly, to acquaint Lord De Clifford in the course of the evening; and accordingly, on the following Wednesday, precisely (for every thing he did was precise) at half-past eleven, his stiff figure was hitched in the doorway, ready to pounce upon poor Julia, whom he condescended to ask to dance; and after stalking through a quadrille with her, he deposited her again with her mother. Surely, thought Julia, a galloppe or mazurka must be quite beyond such a cast-iron-looking personage! She was right, and therefore, for the rest of the evening, enjoyed herself; but as he took care to inform Mrs. Neville, how very much he disapproved of both the last-mentioned dances, it was the last time she ever allowed her daughter to dance them.

It is needless to detail the persecution of entreaties, tears, and persuasion (the hardest persecution of all to resist from those we love), poor Julia underwent; till at length, weary and broken-hearted, she gave herself up at the altar as the victim of Lord De Clifford. Young as she was, she had more character and strength of mind than most women of double her age; and, therefore, prudently and amiably determined to study every whim of her strange and unloveable husband, in the vain hope of conciliating and changing him in time; for she did not yet know the nature she had to deal with. On their marriage, they went down to a place of his in Yorkshire; and Julia’s first and most severe blow was perceiving that her “stern lord” added to his other follies that common error of all fools—namely, considering scepticism as the shortest and surest road to philosophy;—but with an overwrought and culpable delicacy, which only her extreme youth and the abundant generosity of her nature could excuse, not daring to advise, she thought that by submitting to his opinions, and never obtruding her own, she might in time gain an influence over him; for which reason, fearing that remarks might be made in her favour to his prejudice, she seldom or ever went to the village church, as he chose totally to absent himself from it. Luckily for her, the false delicacy of this conduct was utterly lost upon him, and he soon began tauntingly to upbraid her with want of piety, adding with a hoarse grunting sound that he intended for a laugh, “Religion was made on purpose for women and children.”

Her next trial was to find, that instead of receiving any sort of attention from Lord De Clifford’s family, which as a bride at least

she might have anticipated, she, on the contrary, was enjoined by her husband to bow down to them in all things. One day he would issue an order that she should not say this, nor do that, as his brother did not approve of it; another time she was forbidden to wear a particular cap or colour, as his mother did not like it. All this she bore with miraculoustemper and sweetness, still trying by every means in her power to please her unpleasable spouse and his family, to whom *he* seemed to consider her equally wedded and bound. Lord De Clifford had a favourite horse, towards whom, like many more of his compatriots, he evinced much more tenderness and attention than towards his wife. One day, after they had been married about three months, Julia went and fed the animal herself, thinking it would please her husband; and then going into the library, where he was sitting, surrounded by "learned lumber," which he was in vain trying to get into his head, said,

"Oh, George, I have been feeding Selim, and he looked so handsome, and rubbed his head against me!"

"Lady De Clifford," said he, frowning, and laying down the book he was reading, "I beg you will leave off calling me those familiar names. I permitted it at first in the nonsense of the honeymoon, as it is vulgarly called, but upon reflection, I am convinced that they do away with that solemnity of respect which a wife ought to evince towards a husband; and as for feeding Selim, I must say that I think it is very undignified for *my* wife to be going into stables and places, among grooms and helpers, and must beg that it does not happen again."

Poor Julia could not believe that even he was in earnest in forbidding her to call him "George;" and thinking this must be his *début* at a jest, actually burst out laughing: but she was soon undeceived; for Lord De Clifford, flinging down the book he held, and clenching his hand at her, said, with his eyes kindling, like lava burnt white, "By G—d, if you dare laugh at me, madam, I will fell you to the earth!"

She left the room; a violent flood of tears relieved her, as she knelt down, and cast her burden upon Him who alone could bear it for her, and she met her tyrant at dinner without one word or look of reproach. At length she became a mother, a circumstance which but added to her miseries; for even the nursery was not exempted from the laws and regulations of Lord De Clifford; moreover, if ever she passed an hour together with her child, he was sure to send for her, saying, when she appeared,

"There is nothing now thought of but that child, while your duty towards me is totally neglected, madam. I desire you may not fool away all your time in that d—d nursery."

Then, his mother was to be courted and consulted upon all occasions, not from affection, but because she was rich, and had much

in her power ; but though humbly solicited, she declined being godmother to the child, averring, that she never liked taking any sort of responsibility upon herself, and that whatever she might do hereafter, must entirely depend upon circumstances ; nor could she, for six years, be induced to take the slightest notice of her daughter-in-law, though she condescended to interfere in the most minute of her domestic arrangements through the medium of her son, and by incessant fault-finding, keep her in due subordination ; as she wisely concluded (falling into the common error of judging others by herself), that Lady De Clifford could not be possessed of so much beauty and so many accomplishments, without being proportionately arrogant and self-sufficient, and therefore requiring a counterpoise ; for which reason she generously established herself as that counterpoise, and a most disagreeable and effectual one she was. Julia had been married about eight years, the two last of which had been spent on the continent, whither they had been led ; for in her husband's ear

“ Some demon whisper'd—‘ Visto, have a taste.’ ”

“ Virtu ” was therefore his present mania, and his wife was thankful that anything took him from tormenting her, and still more so, that he had allowed her sister to come abroad with her ; an indulgence he might not have granted, had he not deemed that, by so doing, he should extend his empire to a slave the more. It was at this juncture that Mowbray came to Milan ; he soon discovered Lord De Clifford's foible of wishing to appear a man of science, letters, taste, and universal information ; and therefore, adopting the plan of the witty and clever Lady M., with regard to her dolt of a lord, who had never in his life been guilty of thinking a good thing, much less of saying one ; when Lord De Clifford had been particularly ponderous, he used always to preface some brilliant or wise remark at dinner with, “ I think it was you, Lord De Clifford, who told me this morning such and such a thing ; ” or “ I think it was you, that so justly observed so and so ; ” or, “ as you very wittily remarked a while ago ; ” by which scheme, he so completely ingratiated himself with his pompous tool, that he issued a standing order to his wife, to be particularly civil to Mr. Mowbray, as he was a young man of infinite judgment and discernment. From this commenced a new epoch in Lady De Clifford's life : though time and experience had annihilated the hope of ever softening her husband towards her, it had not subdued her habit of endurance. Many and bitter were the tears that this outward restraint cost her ; but from the time of her acquaintance with Mowbray, it cost her less to bear the unkindness of her husband, for, in fact, she dwelt on it less ; a void seemed filled, she knew not how, in her heart ; she never felt the tears gush to her eyes, as formerly, when she looked at the happy faces of Fanny or Sa-

ville, or heard their little tender speeches to each other. She liked Mowbray—nay, she longed for his appearance of a day; but she set all this down to the score of gratitude—he was so kind, so gentle, so attentive to her; he remembered her most trifling wishes, nay, more, he anticipated them: how good, how condescending this was of one who was the “*enfant gâté*” of London! Poor Lady De Clifford! a woman may be so brutalized and subdued by ill-treatment from the one who should be the last in the world to be guilty of such inhumanity towards her, as to become grateful for the civility of a sweep in moving out of her way in the street; and at this pass had Julia arrived;—for one of her servants could not in the routine of their business put a chair out of her way, but what she felt indebted to them as though they had conferred an obligation upon her. How much more then did she feel the incessant, the delicate, the devoted attention of a man like Mowbray, whose tones were gentle in speaking to any woman, but when addressing her became perfect music? Once, and only once, she asked herself if she did not like him too much; but she blushed crimson at the thought, and seemed to think the prudery of her imagination had insulted the purity of her heart by her question. Thus poor Lady De Clifford was hastening to the same precipice as Mowbray, though by a very different channel; for while, taking innocence for her guide, she was led into danger from the ignorance of her steersman of the invisible shoals and quicksands that abound in the perilous sea of passion, he was steering headlong to destruction, with knowledge of the world for his chart, false hope for his rudder, and his own wayward and ungoverned heart for a compass.

CHAPTER VI.

Child.—Hey diddle, diddle,

The cat and the fiddle—

Mother.—Thee ought not to say that, Mary; for hey diddle, diddle has no meaning.

Child.—The cat and the fiddle,

The cow jump'd over the moon—

Mother.—Stop! thee may say the cat and the fiddle, if thee pleases; but do not say the cow jumped over the moon—say the cow jumped under the moon: for thee should know that a cow cannot jump over the moon, though it may jump under the moon,

Child.—The little dog laugh'd to see the sport.

Mother.—What, Mary!—a dog laugh!—Thee should not say so; for thee knows a dog cannot laugh: thee might say the little dog barked, if thee pleases.

Child.—While the dish ran after the spoon.

Mother.—Mary! Mary! how can a dish run? Does thee not know that a dish has no legs to run with? Thee should have said, the dish and the spoon.

Utilitarian Philosophy for Nurseries and Noodles.

ONE morning as Lord De Clifford was preparing to sally out to meet an Armenian, from whom he was to purchase some pseudo-

Etruscan manuscripts, a single hieroglyphic of which he could not decipher, his little girl was sitting playing with her doll, and lecturing Zoe for her mercurial propensities, as, one after another, she purloined first the doll's shoe, and then its necklace, and decamped to the other end of the room to play with them; and little Julia, having often felt the beneficial effects of moral poetry upon herself, began repeating to Zoe the ancient, though somewhat prejudiced and illiberal, madrigal of

“Taffy was a Welshman, and Taffy was a thief;”

when her stately sire interrupted her with, “Julia, you are much too old to have your head crammed with all those ignorant vulgarities; and with a little application, you would find it quite as easy to learn something useful. For instance, Taffi was not a Welshman, but an Italian poet, born at Genoa, in the year—”

“Oh! yes, I know all that, papa,” said the little girl, interrupting in her turn; “at least, he was an Italian painter, born at Florence, in 1213; and he and Cimabue brought the taste for Mosaic into Italy. Mrs. Mangnall's question-book has that in it; but the Italian's name is spelt T-a-f-f-i; and, indeed, papa, my Taffy was a Welshman, and he really did steal a bone of beef, as I was going to tell Zoe, and his name is spelt with a y; and I do n't believe he was any relation at all to Taffi the Italian, though I do not know what time my Taffy was born; as Mrs. Mangnall's book do n't say, which I am surprised at.”

“Lady De Clifford,” cried her enraged husband, “that child has become insufferably pert and forward, and you had better check it in time, or take the consequences, madam.”

So saying, he left the room, slamming the door violently after him.

“Ha! ha! ha!” laughed Fanny, who had been drawing at the other end of the room. “La pruova d'un opera seria!”

“Hush! hush, Fanny, for heaven's sake! he will hear you,” said her sister; “besides, you should not, before Julia.”

“Ma foi!” said Fanny, throwing herself back in her chair, and wiping the tears from her eyes, which she had fairly laughed into them: “Ce qui fait le malheur des uns, fait le bonheur des autres; c'était impayable. Come here, darling,” continued she to little Julia, and taking the child's head in both her hands, said, kissing her forehead “con amore”—“Ju, you were a very naughty girl to interrupt your papa so, just now, when he was *instructing* you, and so, to punish you, I'm going to send you of a message. Go up stairs, and tell Luton to send me down that box of pencils I got from England the other day; and then go and ask Mademoiselle D'Antoville, if she will have the goodness to lend me that print she has of Atala.”

“Ah! but that's no punishment at all,” said the child; “for I like doing any thing for you, aunt Fanny,” and away she ran.

“Now, I hope you perceive, my dear Julia,” said the incorri-

gible Fanny, bursting into a fresh fit of laughter, "the error you have been guilty of in allowing Ju to learn her A B C too fast. However, what is done cannot be helped ; but I hope, for the future, you will manage better. Let me see—she is now seven ; so if we can but contrive to make her forget the best part of what she has learned, and prevent her knowing more at fourteen than she ought to know now, she may then have the happiness of becoming a suitable companion for her father; and who knows but that, in time, she may even retrograde to a level with his extraordinary mind?"

"Ah! Fanny! Fanny!" said her sister, shaking her head, "it is no laughing matter."

"No, indeed, I do n't think it is," said Fanny ; "but, as Lord Byron says,

'Strange though it seem, yet with extremest grief
Is link'd a mirth that doth not bring relief!'

And I can only say, as poor Mademoiselle D'Antoville said to me the other day—(and here Fanny put her hands into the pockets of her apron, bent her head forward, and her brows into a thoughtful frown, and changed her voice and face so completely into that of Mademoiselle D'Antoville, that even Lady De Clifford's gravity gave way, as she repeated)—I can only say, as Mademoiselle D'Antoville said to me the other day. 'Milord a tant de science ! tant de profondeur ! que, quand il débite sur le chapitre de l'éducation, jamais, jamais je ne puis le comprendre!'

"Poor Mademoiselle D'Antoville," said Lady De Clifford ; "I do not half like her as an instructress, now Julia is growing older; there is too much of the old novel style of French governess about her. She seems too thoroughly imbued with what may be termed the apocalypse of the old regime in France—namely, 'Qu'on peut tout dire et tout faire, pourvu qu'on le fasse et le dise poliment;' and my fear is, that in time she may convert, or rather pervert, Julia to the same creed."

"Exactly so," said Fanny ; "but you know it is not every one that is OEdipus enough to discover that 'Milord a tant de science et tant de profondeur,' etc., etc., etc.—et quand il y a des sots à triple étage—there must be flatterers to clamber up to the heights of their folly; and you may depend upon it, that my illustrious brother-in-law finds too many charms in the conversation of Mademoiselle D'Antoville (who can alone appreciate his wonderful talents!) to part with her for your sake, or Julia's either; except, indeed, that in time he may find an equivalent in Mr. Mowbray, who seems to have borrowed D'Antoville's powers of listening, and all her craft, and more than all her talent, in conveying to him an idea of his own great and paramount superiority in all things. However, 'blessed be—be the peace-makers,' say I, and I'm sure we have all led a much happier life for the last two months,

since Mr. Mowbray has kindly taken upon himself the arduous office of inflating the balloon of Lord De Clifford's vanity; and I feel so grateful to him, that I have serious thoughts of working him a waistcoat, as a slight tribute of esteem and respect—as the corporations have it, when they give dinners and snuff-boxes to ministers and patriots out of place!”

Lady De Clifford had got as far as “Fie, fie, Fanny!” in a lecture to her laughter-loving sister, when the door opened, and Mowbray and Saville were announced.

“We were just talking about you, Mr. Mowbray,” said Fanny.

“About me!” said Mowbray, glancing quickly at Lady De Clifford's blushing and confused face: “and how came I to be so honoured?”

“I was wondering,” replied Fanny, “whether there were any prizes for patience at Harrow; and, if so, how many you gained in a week.”

“You speak in riddles, my fair sibyl,” said Mowbray; “pray expound them.”

“All in good time,” laughed Fanny; “I will bring you my books when they are ready—that is, if you will promise to purchase them ‘*coûte qu’il coûte*,’ at the first offer.”

“I promise,” said Mowbray, lifting up his hand with mock solemnity, and then turning to Lady De Clifford, added, “perhaps you will tell me what Miss Neville means?”

“That would be difficult,” said Lady De Clifford, smiling, “for I do not believe she knows herself.”

At this moment little Julia returned, and seeing Mowbray, ran up to him. “Oh! Mr. Mowbray,” said she, “I am so glad to see you! How is Prince? and where is he? I have got a story to read to him; for do you know, the other day, when I was at dinner, he came in, and I went into the next room for something I had forgotten, and I left Prince, telling him to be sure and not eat up *all* my dinner, and he promised, as plain as a dog could promise with his big brown, honest looking eyes, that he would not; but though I was only gone two minutes, when I came back all my beccaficas were gone, and he had just got his paw in the maccaroni! and now I’ll get the story I am going to read him.”

At any other time Lady De Clifford would have begged of Julia to postpone the perusal of it till Prince was there to hear it; but as Fanny and Saville were now engaged in a low tête-à-tête at the other end of the room, she was glad of any circumstance that would prevent her and Mowbray being reduced to the same alternative, especially as he stood leaning on the mantel-piece, in one of those fits of abstraction that had so often taken possession of him lately, when all around appeared lost to him, while his eyes seemed as if they had been given to him for no other purpose than to rivet them upon her.

“Well, get the book, Cara,” said her mother, with one of those April smiles, that only are called in to struggle with a tear, “and let us see how you mean to reform Prince’s morals.”

The little girl took a small case of books off the table, and seating herself at her mother’s feet, said, “Now, mamma, you need not listen so much, but *you*, Mr. Mowbray, must be *very* attentive, because it is for the good of *your* dog. The story is called,

“‘LE CHIEN DE LIVERPOOL.’

“‘Un fermier de Liverpool avait un chien plein de courage, d’intelligence, et d’autres belles qualités, mais qui avait un défaut que rien ne peut excuser, même dans les chiens : il manquait de probité.’ Now, do you understand what that means, Mr. Mowbray?” continued she, pushing him with her little foot, “do you hear me? ‘le chien du fermier manquait de probité;’ do you understand?”

“Yes,” said Mowbray, biting his lip, and withdrawing his eyes from Lady De Clifford; “It means that he was not fit to be trusted—what a miserable dog he must have been!” and then, as if all security consisted in sounds, he cried out at the top of his voice across the room, “Saville, do you recollect whether it was to-morrow or Wednesday that De Clifford fixed upon for going to Como? for *that* was what I came here with you to find out.”

Oh! human nature, where begin and where end thy wayward mysteries? Lady De Clifford, who a moment before would have given any thing that Mowbray had not come that morning, now felt that sharp pain dart through her heart, which wounded pride and sudden disappointment coming together invariably occasion. “Surely,” thought she, “he need not take such pains to announce that his *only* motive in coming here was to ascertain Lord De Clifford’s will and pleasure!—It is, to say the least of it, unkind, —I mean, rude; nay, almost impertinent of him!”

“Really,” said Saville, in reply to Mowbray’s question, “I don’t know, but I think it was to-morrow the party was to take place.” And again turning to Fanny, he dropped his voice into the low whispering tone, from which his friend’s interrogatory had roused it.

“Do you know?” inquired Mowbray of Lady De Clifford, feeling that it was necessary to say something, and not knowing very well what to say.

“I really do not,” said she, coldly, “as this is the first time I have heard of the arrangement; but as it is to be a duo, I suppose Lord De Clifford will let you know in time; at present he is out for the day, I believe.”

“A duo!” said Mowbray, looking as seriously alarmed as if he had been in quarantine, and a black spot had suddenly appeared on his arm. “Good Heavens! No; you—I mean, I thought—I understood—that we were all going—”

"Oh ! perhaps so," replied Lady De Clifford, "but I have heard nothing about it; however," continued she, looking across the court, "there is Lord De Clifford going up the steps to Julia's school-room. Fanny, as you are near the window, just tell Dorio, who I see standing in the yard, to tell his master that Mr. Mowbray wants to speak to him."

"Pray do not trouble yourself, Miss Neville," said Mowbray, springing forward, "any other time will do as well."

But Fanny, whose head was already out of the window, giving her sister's message to Dorio, did not hear him. An awkward pause now ensued, at least it would have been such to Mowbray, if he had not suddenly discovered that Tiney's nose was very hot, and declared that the dog could not be well.

"Poor Ti.," said he, kissing her head, and stroking her long silken ears, "I'm sure she is ill. I wish, Lady De Clifford, you would let me have her for a week : I have a groom who is a famous dog-doctor ; he shall prescribe for her, and I'll administer all the medicines myself ; and, above all, I'll promise to love and to pet her as much as you do."

"Oh ! *that* would be impossible," said she, laughing.

"Besides," chimed in Julia, "Prince might eat her up at a mouthful, as he did my beccaficas ; and I'm sure Zoe teases her quite enough as it is, poor dog !"

Lord De Clifford not making his appearance, and no message having been returned to the one sent, Lady De Clifford now rang to inquire the reason of it ; the servant in waiting was despatched to Dorio, and returned with the answer that Lord De Clifford was not yet come home.

"Not come home ! that is impossible. Send Dorio here." Dorio came and made the same reply : the whole party looked at each other with unfeigned astonishment, and asked almost simultaneously, "Who then was it that went up the opposite steps a quarter of an hour ago, when you stood by the lion at the foot of them?"

"C'était l'homme d'affaires de Mademoiselle d'Antoville," replied the immovable Dorio, twitching the ring in his right ear. "That fellow," said Saville, as he shut the door, "must have been for a long time primo buffo at the San Carlino, to tell a lie with such consummate genius, and such inimitable composure."

The carriage was now announced, and the two friends were obliged, "*malgré eux*," to take their departure. Mowbray, however, contrived to make himself happy, by carrying off Tiney, and a bunch of violets that Lady De Clifford had dropped, and Saville whispered in Fanny's ear, "Am I to dine here to-day, dearest?" "Why, as that is a matter of business," said she, laughing, "you must ask '*l'homme d'affaires de Mademoiselle D'Antoville* !'"

CHAPTER VII.

You have a head, and so has a pin.—NURSERY COMPLIMENT.

We glide o'er these gentle waters
As through æther skims the dove;
Yet, fairest of beauty's daughters,
I may not breathe my love;
But while the happy breezes play,
And kiss and whisper round thee,
Dearest, ah! will they not betray
The mysteries they have found thee?
For their wild breath is but my sighs,
Which are but fond thoughts of thee,
That escape to gain the skies,
Where they may aye immortal be!—M.S.

L'aria e la terre e l'acqua son d'amor piene.—PETRARCHA.

LORD DE CLIFFORD, who, among his other talents, had a wonderful turn for petty economy, had been for the last six weeks *deeply absorbed* in Professor Autenrieth's plan for making bread out of deal boards; he had actually got as far as the sawdust, and procured a quantity of marsh-mallow roots. Such *abstruse* and *scientific* labours required relaxation; and Mademoiselle D'Antoville, who had not found the least difficulty in persuading him, that he distanced Sir Humphry Davy in science, Tycho Brae in astronomical lore, and Bayle in general knowledge, found it equally easy to convince him that the exercise of such a monopoly of talents might be fatal, if unrelieved by the "otium cum dignitate" that should accompany them; consequently the excursion to Como was proposed by her, as one of a series to take place for that purpose. Saville drove Fanny in his phaeton, the Seymours (who were of the party) good-naturedly gave Monsieur de Rivoli a seat in their carriage, while Lady De Clifford's was occupied by herself, her sposo, Mowbray, and Mademoiselle D'Antoville, who devoted herself to *appreciating* Lord De Clifford. They had not got above half way, before mademoiselle began to purse up her mouth, close her drab-coloured eyes, and incline her head faintly towards his shoulder, at which Lady De Clifford offered her "vinaigrette," intending to request she would change places with her, as she feared that sitting with her back to the horses might have occasioned her indisposition; but before she had time to utter one word, her husband seized her extended hand, and dragging her rudely from her seat, placed his grammatical inamorata in it, exclaiming, "Do you not see she is ill from sitting backwards."

"I was just going to offer Mademoiselle D'Antoville my seat," said poor Lady De Clifford, trying to suppress the tears that had come into her eyes.

"Oh, you are always going," sneered her amiable lord.

Mowbray, who could hardly contain his indignation at this scene,

caught himself mechanically changing his place to the one beside her, which her husband had vacated to watch over Mademoiselle D'Antoville ; and, throwing a shawl over her, he pressed her hand in both of his, as he said—"Good heavens ! I hope you won't suffer from sitting here ; the wind is so much more keen than at the other side."

Julia's face crimsoned as she withdrew her hand—her heart was too full for utterance ; but Mowbray thought he had never, for the greatest service he had conferred on another, been so amply repaid, as when her eyes for one moment met his, as she drew the shawl he had given more closely about her. Meanwhile mademoiselle, after labouring for a few minutes like a steam-engine, thought fit to open her eyes, and raising her head from Lord De Clifford's shoulder, where it had *unconsciously* rested, murmured, or rather shrieked in a ' Théâtre Français ' tone,

"Ah, c'est toi ?" to which he responded, with undeniable truth and brevity—"Oui, c'est moi !"—The fair sufferer's next thought was for her dress, and, carefully arranging her shawl and bonnet, which had not been in the least deranged during her *feint*, she exclaimed, "Ah, mon Dieu ! comme je suis abîmée !" Then suddenly recollecting, that although she was Lord De Clifford's Aspasia, she was also his wife's governess, she turned to the latter to apologize for having turned her out of her place, and to beg she would retake it.

"Oh, d—n it ! she'll do very well where she is," said her kind and affectionate spouse, before she had time to decline mademoiselle's proffered politeness.

When they reached the little inn at Como, they found the rest of the party had arrived before them, and had ordered the boats and luncheon—to which latter they were doing full justice—all, except poor Monsieur de Rivoli, who was warring with the mosquitos, and trying to make the same bargain with them that Polyphemus did with Ulysses—namely, that they would devour him the last. At length, even his "occupation was gone," and they all descended to embark upon certainly the most lovely lake in the world. Oh, the deep beauty of its silent waters, glassing on their diamond surface the fair and gem-like beauties of its sunlit margins ! The wind had gone down—not a breath seemed to kiss the leaves or dimple the tide, which lay like a sleeping child beneath ; it was one of those hushed and balmy days, that give a luxury to the happy by shedding over them a melancholy that is purely imaginative—that melancholy which gives a poetry to every feeling, because it springs from no harsh *reality* ; while, to the miserable, such days seem as if Nature had returned, like a long-absent friend, to soothe and atone to them for the unkindness of fate. The light-hearted and prosperous can never worship Nature with the incense of the heart

—*gratitude*; for to them, the softest air, the brightest skies, the sweetest flowers, are but so many minor adjuncts in the gorgeous pageant of their destiny; but to the crushed heart, the burning brain, the warped and withered mind, the moral Cain who has been the fratricide of his own welfare, every look, and breath, and tone of *hers*, comes like a good Samaritan—healing what others smote, fostering what others deserted, rescuing what others endangered—e'en the wayward and erring spirit of man, and at length leading it “through nature up to nature's God.” Alas! alas! why is it that so many of us must be rejected of earth, ere we can think of heaven? Why is it that religion is so often only resorted to as an elixir for worldly disappointments? why is it that we follow the example of the heathen Agrippa, who, when Augustus refused to accept of the dedication of the Pantheon, then, and not till then, consecrated it to all the gods of Olympus?

What a Pantheon is the human heart! rejected by one, only to be filled with innumerable and still vainer idols, and at last, perhaps, in its best stage, mistaking the gorgeous and poetical pomps, the Catholicism of the passions, for the pure and undefiled Christianity of the soul! But the reason of this mistake is clear—“They will tarry by the road-side, hearing tales of the fountain, instead of repairing straight to the fountain itself, there to drink of its waters.” If even the metaphysics of Aristotle are so mystified—if the peripatetic doctrines are so perverted through their commentators (including Cicero, the cleverest of them), how much more must Christianity have suffered from the same source? inasmuch as it being of a divine, and consequently of more simple origin, it is more easily perverted through human and complex means; and the most dangerous perversions of all are the perversions of those natures which have an innate craving after right; for then begins the self-deluding sophistry which tries to germ a wrong act with a good motive. At this state had Mowbray arrived: he had repeated to himself so often that it was only common humanity to pay Lady De Clifford every possible attention, neglected and ill-treated by her husband as she was, that, instead of trying, as he had at first done, to check his feelings of compassion towards her, he made a point of yielding to and encouraging them on all occasions; and after the scene in the carriage, he thought it incumbent upon him to take as much care of her as possible for the rest of the day: indeed, she had fallen to his share; Fanny and Saville having of course paired off; and Monsieur de Rivoli determining, what little time he could spare from smoothing the rugged path of his mustachios, and humming snatches of “*Sul margine*,” “*La Suisse au bord du lac*,” “*O Pescator*,” the “*Biondina*,” and other appropriate tunes, as they call “*Non nobis Domini*,” when it is played at a Lord Mayor's feast—to devote himself to eradicating from

Mrs. Seymour's mind certain ignorant prejudices, which her speech about Marie Louise gave him reason to fear she entertained.

Mr. Seymour, like a true Englishman, had fastened upon Count C., and had dragged him back to Boodle's and the House of Commons ; while Lord De Clifford, after having first placed one of his wife's shawls under Mademoiselle d'Antoville's feet, was explaining to her (preparatory to their landing) all about Pliny the elder and Pliny the younger ; while she, though expressing wonder and gratitude for his information, was in reality wishing that, like the former, he had perished in the destruction of Pompeii, and then he could not have prosed her to death as he was doing.

Little Julia had been left at home with her grandmother, who for once had had the mercy not to inflict her company on them.

"Permettez !" said Monsieur de Rivoli, as they landed, offering his arm to Mrs. Seymour, who proposed that they should go over the grounds before they went into the villa.

"Car je ne vois pas," added she, laughingly pointing to her husband's tall figure, as he lingered in the boat, with one of the poor count's buttons still in his custody, which stood a fair chance of being Schedule A'd,—*"Je ne vois pas pourquoi je devrais perdre mon temps parce que j'ai épousé un grand homme !"*

"Ah ! dat is ver true ; I'm glad you have come to my fancy at last," said her companion, pressing her arm, and gently smoothing his off whisker. *"Mais voyez donc,"* continued he, looking at Lord De Clifford and his charge, as they entered the house. *"Comme cette grande bête De Clifford est entraînée par ce loup-garou D'Antoville, qui n'est pas même française, car elle naquit à Berne ; je le sais, moi."*

"It is really extraordinary," said Mrs. Seymour, "and Lady De Clifford so very handsome."

"C'est vrai, mais c'est sa femme !" said Monsieur de Rivoli, with a "probatum est" shrug ; for there was a Madame de Rivoli extant, though seldom heard of, and never seen.

Mrs. Seymour laughed, and they strolled on under the colonnade, by the margin of the lake, her "cicerone" thinking how lucky *she* was that, every one having gone in a different direction, they were left to a "tête-à-tête."

"I wonder if I could get a glass of water ?" said Lady De Clifford, after she and Mowbray had walked on for some time, in one of those awkward fits of silence, which both wished, yet dreaded to break, and which had occurred so frequently of late.

"Certainly," said Mowbray, "and the very best water in the world ; for the spring is as cold, and as clear, as when its quondam owner first wrote its panegyric some eighteen hundred years ago—but I fear you will find the ascent of those old, narrow, broken steps very steep and fatiguing."

“Not in the least,” said Julia, “for in this country one is so used to difficulties, that I think one could climb a rope-ladder to the moon.”

“Then, pray, lean on me,” said Mowbray, giving his arm, which he had not offered before; and then another pause ensued, till they had reached the end of those almost interminable steps, and stood beside the bright cold diamond spring, where an old woman filled a glass from it, and presented it to Lady De Clifford. She drank half of it, and gave back the glass to the crone; she was on the point of throwing the remainder of the water away, in order to refill the glass for Mowbray, who, perceiving her intention, snatched it, and drank off the contents, which having done, he paid the woman, and told her she might go. Then came another pause, which he felt ought to be broken; luckily he recollected the curiosity he had often felt to ascertain the cause of Julia’s evident embarrassment, whenever he had mentioned Herbert Grimstone’s name, and her constant endeavours to avoid the subject; he thought, now that no third person was present, it would be a good opportunity of ascertaining whether her dislike was connected solely with her husband’s presence, or whether it arose from any mere personal aversion of her own; and having heard Lord De Clifford say that he expected him shortly at Milan, he thought the best way of broaching the subject would be to ask her when he was coming.

“Do you not expect Grimstone here shortly?” inquired he, fixing his eyes on her as he spoke.

“Yes, in a few days; and now you mention him,” continued Lady De Clifford, blushing deeply at her own weakness, in wishing to vindicate herself to Mowbray, “I have a request—that is, I mean you must have thought it very strange, that whenever you have mentioned him before Lord De Clifford, I have changed the subject; but the reason was, that you have always coupled his name with a sort of laugh against him, and—and—”

“And,” interrupted Mowbray, more vehemently than good-breeding warranted, *you* are so fond of your fortunate and *meritorious* brother-in-law, that you cannot bear to hear him laughed at?”

“Far from it—I, of all people, have no reason to be fond of him; but Lord De Clifford is always angry—that is, annoyed, if any one laughs at him, and therefore I try to prevent it.”

“What goodness! what delicacy! what angelic sweetness! what undeserved amiability on your part!” said Mowbray, thrown off his guard, and hurried by admiration of a character he began to think faultless, into an expression of feelings he had never meant to give utterance to.

“Indeed,” said Julia, crimsoning to her temples, while her eyes filled with tears at what she felt to be “praise undeserved,” “it is

not goodness—it is not amiability—it is not what *you* think it, and what it ought to be—a wish solely to please my *husband* ; but it is that he would be angry with *me*—that he has *forbidden* me ever to join in any jest against his brother.”

If Mowbray had before admired her for her supposed high-wrought goodness, he now still more admired the unflinching integrity which made her humble herself into disclaiming all free will in a right line of conduct, rather than for a moment purchase admiration by the base coin of deceit and hypocrisy ; but the words, “my husband,” grated disagreeably on his ear : she had never before used them—they sounded like a knell to warn him off his perilous and unhallowed course. Hitherto every thing she had affixed the word “*My*” before he had loved for her sake : the tempter had now turned traitor, and stood forth to warn and to denounce. It might have done both in vain, so strong was his impulse, as he looked at Julia’s pale and agitated face, to fling himself at her feet, and there pour out all the burning, maddening feelings that were battling at his heart ; but the reflection, or rather the conviction, that by so doing he would seal his own eternal banishment, restrained him.

So true is it what Madame de Staël says, that “perhaps it is what we shall do to-morrow that will decide our fate ; perhaps even yesterday we said some word that nothing can recall !”

Mowbray *felt* this, though there were too many conflicts struggling within him to *think* it : but as far as the passions are concerned, is not *feeling* always the stenography of *thought* ? He therefore determined to say nothing of her, but replied with as disembarrassed an air as he could assume.

“Then *I* am sure his overweening fraternal affection is but ill requited, for I have heard Grimstone not only laugh at, but abuse him in no measured terms.”

“I do n’t know that it is so much affection as pride,” said Julia, “that makes Lord De Clifford not allow a word to be said against his brother, as they certainly cannot be said to be fond of each other : indeed, brought up as they have been, it is impossible they should. Left at an early age to the sole guidance of a not overwise mother, with much wealth in her power, her constant endeavour has been not to gain their affection and respect from principle and merit on her own part, but to secure their *attention*, and enforce their submission, from the sordid and selfish motive of anticipated gain. Consequently, when the elder offends her, she invariably doubles her show of kindness and promises to the younger ; so that the well-being of the one is unavoidably made a source of discontent and fear to the other ; and as this terrible system was begun in childhood, when every little gift or indulgence that was granted to the reigning favourite was sealed with a stipulation that it was

to be a profound secret from the less fortunate brother, it is no wonder that those three essential ingredients in every relationship of life—frankness, confidence, and sincerity, should be wanting between them. Indeed, on the part of Herbert, I think his union with his brother is solely a political one: he wants in himself that singleness of motive and firmness of purpose, which invests even erroneous principles and bad measures with an artificial respectability—the respectability of consistency. Consequently, whatever point he steers for, having no intrinsic resources, he will always be obliged to be towed to it by the exertions of another, which will be the sole motive of his adherence to any one.”

“You seem to know him well, at all events,” replied Mowbray; “for within the last ten years, I have seen him an Ultra-tory, next an ‘in medio tutissimus ibis’ Whig, and now he is a pioneering ‘hic et ubique’ Radical. However, to do him justice, he is the most *promising* young man of his age, for his promises and professions are boundless; but if you only wanted him to walk across the street, he would fail you. These sort of professors are in the moral world what Bahr-bella-ma, the waterless sea of the Libyan desert, is in the geological one, which has all the *appearance* of a large ocean, without containing a single drop of water;—they want nothing but *reality* to satisfy one.”

“You are severe upon him.”

“Nay, for severe, read true; I know of nothing to his credit, and therefore can say nothing.”

“You forget his *debts*,” said Julia smiling.

“True,” replied Mowbray; “in which point I resemble him, for no one appears so completely forgetful of them as himself. But a truce to the puppy, for it is time to think of a far nobler animal—Tiney, whom I am happy to tell you, passed a good night, eat a good breakfast, and has got a nose as cold as the North Pole.”

“Thank you, Doctor Mowbray; then I suppose she may return to her disconsolate parent to-morrow.”

“Not so—a relapse might be fatal, and I cannot part with her yet.”

“How I wish,” said Julia, stooping to pluck a water-lily that grew inside the spring by which they still lingered, “that I had sent some of those large, lotus-like, Rhine water-lilies to England!”

“Would that all your wishes could come so easily within the sphere of my power!” said Mowbray. “An old German friend of mine, Madame de Heidelberg, sent me some three years ago, which are now flourishing at Hilton, and I will order some to be sent down to Grimstone, the next time I write to England.” He then repeated in a low voice,

“I send the lilies given to me;

Though long before thy hand they touch,

I know that they must wither’d be,

But yet reject them not as such.

For I *will* cherish them as dear,
 Because they yet may meet thine eye,
 And guide thy soul to mine even here,
 When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,
 And know'st them gather'd by the Rhine,
 And offer'd from my heart to thine."

Julia blushed; but determining from the pointed manner in which these words were uttered, *not* to take them to herself, said "How beautiful the whole of that canto of Childe Harold is!" and then went on reciting the next stanza.

"The river nobly foams and flows,
 The charm of this enchanted ground,
 And all its thousand turns disclose
 Some fresher beauty varying round:
 The haughtiest breast its wish might bound
 Through life to dwell delighted here;
 Nor could on earth a spot be found
 To nature and to me more dear."

Here she paused, recollecting the concluding lines.

"Pray go on," said Mowbray, rivetting his eyes upon her.

"I forget the rest," stammered Julia.

Her companion took up the "refrain," as she turned away to hide her confusion.

"Could *thy* dear eyes in following mine,
 Still sweeten more these banks—"

"Not of Rhine!" murmured he in a low voice, almost imperceptibly pressing the arm linked in his, which was hastily withdrawn under the pretext of gathering some of the wild verbena, which grows in such profusion on that enchanted ground.

"I wonder," said Julia, "where they can have all gone to? We had better go and look for them; and, indeed, I am tired, so we will go into the house." They descended as they had ascended the steps, in perfect silence. On reaching the house, they found the whole party, except Lord De Clifford and Mademoiselle D'Antoville, assembled in the large barn-like saloon, making themselves very merry at the expense of the daubs of pictures that decorate its walls. Monsieur de Rivoli was engaged in copying one of them (Diana and Endymion) on the back of his hat, and bestowing the physiognomy of the absentee pair upon them; so that the goddess appeared in her infernal character of Hecate, while the profile of the sleeping shepherd made no bad imitation of the crescent on the brow of his innamorata; the moonbeam kiss he had managed to pourtray by a knitting-needle emanating from the bay-coloured hair of the D'Antoville Diana, and terminating in the mouth of Endymion. Fanny, who was enchanted with the likenesses, begged to have the original, of which she promised to make some faithful copies.

"Let me see," said Julia, putting out her hand for the paper.

“No, no,” said Fanny, “you are not to be trusted. There,” continued she, placing it in her bosom :

“Deep in my soul that tender secret dwells,
Lonely and lost to sight for evermore;
Save when some laugh to mine responsive swells,
Then trembles into silence as before.”

“Look here,” said Mrs. Seymour, taking an old mandolin from the window-seat, “I have found a treasure. I wonder if any one can play upon it. Can you?—or you?—or you?—or you?” holding it to every one, till she came to Count C., who, confessing that he did play upon it “a little,” was instantly besieged for a song. When he had succeeded in tuning the crazy old instrument, he good-humouredly sang Aurelio Bertola’s

“Gli occhi azzurri e gli occhi neri.”

“Bene! bene!” echoed from every side.

And Saville repeated the last four lines, as he looked into Fanny’s bright, laughing, hazel eyes,—

“Il primato in questi o in quelli
Non disdende dal colore;
Ma quegli occhi son più belle
Che rispondono più al core.”

Lord De Clifford and Mademoiselle D’Antoville now made their appearance in a most deplorable condition ; the latter drenched to her waist, her drapery clinging like a second Andromeda about her, and her hair dishevelled according to the most orthodox standard of heroic misfortune. His lordship appeared to have been an equal sufferer, being almost as wet, and minus a hat ; so that he had been fain to twist a shawl of mademoiselle’s round his head, “à la Turcque,” which gave him a compound look of fun and ferocity that was irresistible to every one but Lady De Clifford, who dared not join in the laugh that accompanied the queries addressed to the disconsolate pair, as to the how, when, and where, of their misfortunes. Mademoiselle D’Antoville (for a French woman, however “pâle et défaite,” is never speechless) undertook to enlighten them.

“Nous nous promenions, milord et moi, on de bord of de rivere, just talk of la petite Julie, when, all at once, j’ai fait un faux pas, (“Sans doute,” muttered Monsieur de Rivoli ; “et je parie que ce n’est pas le premier,”) and I am tumble into de vatere, and but for le courage of milord, I was sure I am to be drowned !”

“Well,” said Saville, who always stepped forward as risible mediator for the whole party, “the only difference between you and me is the difference that Daniel De Foe said existed between James the First and Charles the First ; namely, that yours was a *wet* martyrdom, and mine has been a *dry* one : for I have been dying of thirst these two hours.”

Every one was now at liberty to laugh—even Julia—which was a great relief to her.

“Did you tumble — (she chose the word as the most undignified she could think of)—did you tumble into the water, too, then?” asked Fanny, as she walked round her mildewed brother-in-law, with her glass up, minutely examining the damage he had sustained by “flood and field.”

“No, Miss Neville, I did not tumble into the water; gentlemen never tumble.”

“They sometimes fall, then,” interrupted Fanny, “like statues from their pedestals, or thunderbolts from the clouds.”

“I merely stretched out my hand to rescue Mademoiselle D’Antoville, who had had the misfortune to slip from the margin; and in rescuing her, I lost my hat, and got dreadfully splashed.”

“Dreadfully indeed,” said Fanny, “for it has a strong family likeness to an immersion and a tumble.”

“You will oblige me, Miss Neville, by not using that vulgar word, coupled with any circumstance relating to me.”

Fanny was about to reply, when an imploring look from her sister checked her. The old woman was then invoked, who procured a quantity of straw, sticks, and fern, and as soon as the inhospitable old chimney could be coaxed into letting them burn, mademoiselle and her “preux chevalier” contrived to dry their weeping garments; after which, a long discussion ensued between Monsieur de Rivoli and Lord De Clifford, as to whether it was likely to rain or not: the former maintaining the wind was in the north, therefore it could not rain—the latter protesting that it was in the south, and consequently that it must rain; appealing to Mowbray as umpire, who jesuitically answered in the words of Pliny: “‘In totum venti omnes a septentrione sicciores quam a meridie.’” (1)

“Ah, yes, var true,” said Monsieur de Rivoli; “but you must first prove dat de wind he is in de sout; now I say he is in de nort. What you say, Ma’m selle d’Antoville? you dat know every ting,” added he ironically.

“Sans doute, je suis de votre avis,” retorted the lady bitterly; “car je ne dispute pas les vents avec une girouette.”

Lord De Clifford indulged in a horse-laugh at mademoiselle’s wit, and the discomfiture of his antagonist. The boats were then ordered, and the party returned in the same order they came. On reaching Milan, they found the amiable dowager not in the most agreeable humour, at having been kept waiting dinner; her hair was more frizzed over her eyes than usual, and she surrounded every one with a perfect “chevaux de frize” of vulgar ceremonies, two invariable signs that all was not right. She met them on the landing-place, and after having cried, “à haute voix,” “Now, dinner

directly!" said in a voice more of anger than anxiety, "Dear me! what could have *kep* you, eh, my dear?" taking her son's hand, and totally disregarding every body else. "It was vastly imprudent of you staying so late; I have been quite frightened about you, and *these here* stupid Italian people could not give any account of you."

Fanny, who delighted in drawing her out, and used to take her off to her face without her ladyship's being a bit the wiser, now stepped forward, and said, "Oh, all sorts of disasters have *kep* us: first Mademoiselle d'Antoville fainted 'en route,' next she fell into the water; and Lord De Clifford had to get her out."

"Bless me! you surely did not go into the water, my dear, I hope?" said his tender mother, again taking his hand.

"Oh, no," replied Fanny, "he stood on 'terra firma,' only stretching out his hand to rescue mademoiselle."

"Hem! vastly good of you, I'm sure, my dear, and does great credit to your head and *hort*;" and then turning to the heroine of the tale, she extended a hand to her, anxiously expressing a hope that she had not suffered from her accident, and assuring her that there was nobody that Lord De Clifford had a greater respect and regard for.

Now all this was said before Julia, and this amiable and judicious mother was perfectly aware of the species of regard her son entertained for mademoiselle, but she pretended not to be so, and that did just as well; besides, thanks to a most gorgon cast of countenance, she had always preserved an immaculate character for personal propriety; and therefore who dare impugn her morality? And just now she was in want of her son's services, in adjusting rather an oblique transaction between herself and one of her tenants; the justice of the case hanging on the farmer's side. Therefore she would not for the world displease him to whom she was alternately tyrant and slave, as their relative positions might require; and this it was that made the moral ophthalmia necessary, which she now thought fit to assume as to the D'Antoville business.

She even carried her dreadful hypocrisy to such a pitch, that she would frequently say to Julia, "You see, Lady De Clifford, that though George is not one of those sort of fondling, kissing fathers, he is so properly anxious about the little *gurl* (for she seldom adopted the familiarity of calling her Julia), that he passes a great deal of his time with Mademoiselle D'Antoville, to see that the method she pursues is the right one."

Upon all which occasions, resentment, contempt, and disgust, had a hard struggle in poor Lady De Clifford's mind, but against the fearful odds of a whole family, and such a family, what could she do? What she did do; bear it till her heart was near breaking. While the dowager was still busy, condoling with and com-

plimenting Mademoiselle D'Antoville, Julia, who unremittingly pursued the "noiseless tenour of her way," stole upstairs, and told Dorio to put his master's things to the fire. Finding he did not follow, she went down in a quarter of an hour to tell him that he had better change his things. She found him closeted "tête-à-tête" with his mother in the ante-room. The latter instantly rose on her entrance, and coming forward with one of her apologetic speeches and vulpine smiles, said,

"I was talking to George, Lady De Clifford, about *this here* disagreeable business of the Rushworth farm, and old Jenkins's impertinent letter; you see I treat you quite *eng fomme*," detaining George.

Julia merely bowed in reply to this elegant harangue, and turning to her husband, said,

"I am afraid you will get cold, remaining in those damp clothes—and all your others are ready aired up stairs."

A sneer and a frown were the only reply of her tender and well-bred lord. Then commenced his mother's entreaties:

"Now, do, my dear, pray do—change your things! it is so dangerous to sit in damp clothes; besides it is not gallant towards the ladies to dine in these." Neither the maternal tenderness, nor the facetious politeness of these entreaties, produced any other result than a—

"D—n it! do n't tease me, ma'am—I'm tired, and my clothes are not damp."

In order to drown these gracious sounds, she turned to Julia with another low smile, and hoped that she would excuse the *great* anxiety of a mother for her son's health;—which anxiety, however, had never manifested itself during the debate upon Jenkins and the Rushworth farm; or indeed till poor Julia had come to tell him his things were at the fire; but with some fortunate individuals, words, like civility, cost nothing, and purchase every thing.

The rest of the party having dressed, and assembled in the drawing-room, dinner was announced, the privileged master of the house taking his seat in his soiled and crumpled morning dress, without either comment or apology to any of his guests.

CHAPTER VIII.

Man proposes, but God disposes.

Man can *pack* the cards that cannot play them.

Ut sementem feceris ita metes.—OLD PROVERB.

LORD DE CLIFFORD'S mother had been an heiress, of remarkably plain person, forbidding manners, and irascible temper, who had "withered on the virgin thorne" till six-and-twenty, when she

thought it would be a pity to “die and leave the world no copy,” and so condescended to bestow her hand upon Colonel Grimstone, who, after having run himself completely out by divers excesses, made up his mind, at the end of five years, to the “*pis aller*” of taking her for better for worse; and found her, as the Irishman said, much worse than he took her for; for, between her and the broad lands, which had been his bait, stood her father, who was so unaccommodating as not to die till twelve years after their marriage, so that the poor colonel, who only survived that event six years, quitted the world without his errand, as some hinted, from the daily dose of this ungilded pill.

He was a frank, open, careless, profligate, and somewhat tyrannical man; but then, conjugal tyranny had been a sort of heir-loom in his family for eight hundred years; so that “*Tyrus*,” an aboriginal family name, had, in the course of years, been corrupted into the popular currency of “*Tyrant*,” a title that every male branch of the Grimstones rather gloried in than otherwise, it being among the very few of their well-merited honours. The colonel, who also rejoiced in it, only suited the action to the word at home, for abroad he was the very pink of good fellows, a sort of whipper-in to all the fun and frolic about town: for in those days, when vice had no masquerades, people did not, as now, “*travailler trop pour la Gazette*,” but then, to be sure, there were no Sunday newspapers, to make it necessary for every profligate to wish to pass for a platonist, and make the world believe,

“*Qu’il s’éveille, qu’il se lève, qu’il s’habille et qu’il sort,
Qu’il rentre, qu’il dine, qu’il soupe, qu’il se couche, et qu’il dort.*”

“*Et voilà tout.*” No! a man’s vices then were a part of the appanage of his rank in life; so that many were compelled to make a great display on very small means.

Colonel Grimstone was a personal friend of Charles James Fox: he had packed the jury for him in his action for debt against Horne Tooke; nay, he had done more—he had trembled for his personal safety, when Burke, in his celebrated speech on the impeachment of Warren Hastings, said, while Sheridan stood on one side of him, and Fox on the other, that “*Vice incapacitates a man from all public duty; it withers the powers of his understanding, and makes his mind paralytic.*” He thought the insult so personal, that his illustrious friends must have taken notice of it; but to his great relief he found them, at the close of the debate, as heedless and free from paralysis as ever.

But let it not be supposed that pleasure alone was his pursuit,—no, he combined the “*utile dulci*” and proved his patriotism by raising a regiment, which he sent out to Egypt to be cut to pieces, while he remained at home, to see their hard-earned banners done due honours to in Whitehall: and although the Prince of Wales

had presented the colours to the regiment, and honoured the gallant colonel with his company at a "dèjeûner" afterwards, still he was not tempted to pay his royal highness the compliment of adopting his motto of "Ich Dien," in his own proper person.

It was at this epoch of his life, in the full tide of his military glory, that he "led to the hymeneal altar the amiable and accomplished Miss Elizabeth Barbara Langton;" but whether it was that the lady was fonder of war than he was, or whether their unhappiness arose from

"Some stranger cause yet unexplored,"

it is certain that their ménage was by no means Utopian, as it lacked that flitch of bacon unanimity of opinion, so desirable in wedded life, and which can never be achieved unless wives are content to live as they must die, intestate. No sooner had Miss Langton become Mrs. Grimstone, than she found out that she was the most devoted daughter in the world, and could not live without her mother, for whom, to do her justice, she had the greatest possible respect; as that exemplary parent, who had been many years separated from her husband, had, from inconceivable economy, out of a very limited income, contrived to amass a large fortune; all of which she promised to leave to whichever of her daughter's future progeny she should like best. This good lady was what is called a woman of spirit, and such characters are seldom guilty of either cunning or hypocrisy, as they invariably prefer carrying things by storm, to gaining them by stratagem; and though in reality not a whit less void of sense than her daughter, her bluntness gave a sort of *Brummagem* energy to her character, which often led people into the error of thinking her a clever woman, and gave her absolute dominion over the weak, vacillating, low cunning imbecility of her daughter's mind, who never could perform the simplest act without labelling it with a false motive, for insincere people are always cowards; consequently, if she only wished a door or a window opened or shut, she was sure to premise that she did so solely for the sake of another. This species of gratuitous dissimulation became insupportably wearisome to her husband, who at length actually dreaded taking a second cup of tea, or putting on a great-coat, if she asked him to do so, lest in complying he should be entrapped into the, to him, unpardonable weakness of gratifying some covert wish of his wife's; at the same time that he would have to submit to the humiliation of being apparently the obliged person. To speak truly, he had as many faults as most men, but even those in which he was deficient, he was sure to be supplied with by the penetration and spirit of his mother-in-law.

Previous to their marriage, his wife had stipulated that she was to pass every season in London: he had faithfully performed the compact for three years; but when the fourth came, he was laid

up with the gout, had spent a great deal of money in improvements at Grimstone, and, in short, found many other cogent reasons for remaining in the country; all of which plunged his lady wife into an undispellable fit of sulk, till her spirited mother declared that such tyranny could not and should not be borne. So, accordingly, she and her daughter took their departure “*sans cérémonie*,” the next morning for London, and took a house in Grosvenor Square, where they unmolestedly went to *drums* and dinners for six months.

The poor colonel, as soon as he had recovered from the first shock of this dreadful innovation upon the marital authority of the Grimstones, began to think what deities he should set up in place of the *Lares* and *Penates*, which had used him so scurvily; and he luckily recollected that there was a dormant Irish peerage in the family, which he might as well revive, as the only chance he had now left of lording it over his wife; and he bestirred himself so expeditiously, that in less than eight months the patent was made out, and he became “Viscount De Clifford, of the county of Roscommon, and Baron Portmarnham, of Portmarnham Castle;” but he did not long survive his budding honours, for the following year he was gathered to his fathers, where nothing remained to him of all his pomp, but a splendid mausoleum in the family vault, and an epitaph, which (thanks to his widow’s *love of truth*) did not tell so many falsehoods as most posthumous panegyrics do. Released from her bondage, Lady De Clifford devoted herself to spoiling her children, quarrelling with her neighbours, and turning away her servants; but lest the former should prove too arduous a task for her own individual and unassisted labours, her mother kindly undertook to facilitate it, by taking her favourite Master Herbert under her own especial care, and training him up to expect the eighty thousand pounds she meant to leave him; so that by the time he was fourteen, she had indulged him into a sort of domestic Alexander Selkirk, who fancied himself “monarch of all he surveyed” at school. When other boys were content with cherries and strawberries, he was fed upon peaches and pine-apples, which he seemed to consider his “*jure divino*,” and therefore never shared either with his brother, or his playfellows. Money was supplied to him on an equally liberal scale, which produced the good effect of making him extravagant to the most boundless excess, which as it naturally increased his selfishness, prevented his ever deviating in his most unguarded moments into anything bordering upon generosity, though he had been often known to purchase some bauble that he had taken a fancy to from his companions at *treble* its value, in order that there might be no delay to his becoming the possessor, and afterwards boast how he had assisted the seller when he was in distress—a fact he was confirmed in by his mother’s and grandmother’s invariable assertion upon beholding all such

purchases, and hearing the sum he had paid for them : “Indeed, my dear Herbert, you are far *too generous* !” Meanwhile his brother, under maternal auspices, was undergoing a different but equally judicious mode of treatment. Mrs. Langton, in her usual *spirited* manner, had declared her decided aversion for him, and her daughter had too much filial affection ever to differ from her *openly*; consequently, with her “protégé” she was compelled to have recourse to a species of contraband spoiling, gauged by falsehood and deceit, that engendered in him the selfishness of covetousness and avarice, to quite as great an extent, as the selfishness of profusion had been fostered in his brother.

Lady De Clifford’s sole object was to make up to him for his grandmother’s partiality to Herbert; consequently, whatever the latter got, she was sure to give him too, but always accompanied with the strict injunction that it was to be kept a profound secret from his brother and grandmother. All this naturally made him cold, stern, crafty, and ambiguous, and careful never to allow a glimmering of his designs to appear before their execution; so that he never was seduced into honesty, or betrayed into candour—two circumstances that gave him a fearful advantage over every one he had any dealings with. His grandmother’s ceaseless invectives gave him a morbid resentment of censure, while, on the other hand, his mother’s eternal praises of every thing he said, and every thing he did, gave him an equally morbid and perfectly insatiable craving for flattery, which choked up both his intellect and his feelings. Pride, one of the noblest attributes of our nature, if properly directed, was in him the “overgrown rank weed” of vulgar externals, inflated by egotism into the omnipresence of himself, and never extending beyond “a local habitation and a name.”

His mother was eternally dinning into his ears, that the Grimstone estate (which his father had left much mortgaged, and which she had thrown into chancery) would, by the time he was of age, be one of the finest properties in England; and that to it she would add, at her death, her own place of Blichingly, in ——shire, containing a fine old castle, and an unincumbered property, in a ring-fence of thirty miles in circumference.

But, alas! all is not gold that glitters. Upon his coming of age, the mortgage on the Grimstone estate remained almost entirely unpaid off, and the property any thing but improved from its long slumber in chancery; so that the young heir commenced life as his father had ended it, by being an embarrassed man. To be sure, there was still Blichingly in perspective—but then his mother still lived; it was in her sole power, and under her sole control; and there were such things as caprices and contingencies in the world, and, worst of all, there was now a *bare* chance of its being, like

Macedonia at the death of Alexander, divided among many : for Herbert Grimstone had, at the end of five years, run through every shilling of the eighty thousand pounds his grandmother had left him ; and with that genius for finance, which had ever distinguished him, he had contrived to get ten thousand pounds in debt besides ; add to which, Lady De Clifford had accumulated two valuable acquaintances in the Isle of Thanet—a Mr. and Mrs. Tymmons.

The male Tymmons was an attorney, and ingratiated himself into her ladyship's good graces, by giving her sundry remnants of his legal abilities at the cheapest possible rate ; while the female specimen made herself extremely useful in the secret service line of buying bargains, procuring chronicles of the kitchen, and a catalogue raisonné of the conversation in the servants'-hall ; to say nothing of being the triple substitute of society, companion, and counsellor. As her patroness, having quarrelled with her whole neighbourhood in ——shire, and closed her park gates against the hounds, had no troublesome visitors, and as she seldom confided her secrets to her sons, Mrs. Tymmons's sympathizing bosom became a safe repository for such important mysteries, as whether John the footman talked too often to Mary the housemaid, or whether the bay mare was to be turned out to grass, or the black horse to be sent to Tattersall's ; whether Lord De Clifford was to be sent half a buck, and Herbert only a haunch, or vice versâ ; or last, though not least, whether Anne had told Martha, who had told Jane, who had told Sarah, who had told Mrs. Mince, the housekeeper, who had told Mrs. Frump, her ladyship's-maid, that Thomas had said to James at dinner, that the beer at Blichingly was much weaker than what the servants had at Lord Cramwell's ; for which reason the aforesaid Thomas was instantly to be discharged, and Mrs. Tymmons despatched upon a Diogenes's mission in search of an honest man, which a man capable of preferring one concoction of malt and hops to another certainly could not be called, at least when the beverage so preferred was not brewed at Blichingly.

Besides, the Tymmons being justly proud of knowing a Viscountess, and especially one with so much in her power, was the very Triton of the Toadies ; and, by her incessant deference and adulation, served to remind her illustrious friend of her superior station ; otherwise, from the constancy and minuteness of her domestic details, her ideas stood a fair chance of never extending beyond a kitchen-maid or a cabbage-stalk, as her phraseology had already become that of the kitchen.

But the most formidable of all these rival votaries, in Lord De Clifford's eyes, was Herbert ; for he had not only to get his mother to pay his debts, but also to play a bold stroke for Blichingly,

which still, however, stood provokingly forward in the vista of his elder brother's prospects.

At this critical epoch, he became acquainted with Julia Neville, and having taken a fancy to her, determined, even at the risk of losing Blichingly, to marry her. Here was noble, disinterested generosity! which, to her shame be it said, Julia never felt half grateful enough for, though her husband reminded her of it incessantly. His mother was for a long time unappeasable, as she thought she had a right to insist upon his marrying a person with money; however, to do him justice, as soon as his fancy was over, he made every atonement in his power to his mother's outraged authority, by humbling and subjugating his wife to all her vulgar insolence and caprices as much as possible, and turning away his own servants at her instigation, as often as she did hers, especially if they happened to be favourites with Julia.

This amiable and exemplary lady, whom her sons voted a pattern of piety, because she went to church occasionally, could repeat the creed out of book, used the word religion very often, and subscribed once to the Bible Society, never saw her daughter-in-law for five years, though she was in the habit of calling at her door, while she sent for her son to visit her in the carriage; and probably she might have gone to her grave without doing so, had she not been once dangerously ill, and both her sons abroad; whereupon Julia wrote, and sent to know if there was any thing she could do for her? So that three months after, chaperoned by her son, she paid a visit; but fearing this might be too great an honour for his wife, Lord De Clifford ushered her into the room where Julia sat, by saying, "My mother has come to see the house!"

From that day, the little remnant of peace Julia had had was at an end; for, though the dowager was sickeningly civil, ceremonious, and flattering to her face, yet never did she enter her house, but what she was sure to hear from her husband the same day such speeches as the following: "As my mother says, how I am thrown away upon you!" or, "As my mother says, how extremely shabby the furniture looks, though new last year!" and, "How foolish you must be to keep such bad servants! What a difference between this carpet and hers in Bruton-street, which has been down these ten years! But then my mother is not a fine lady."

"And perhaps she do n't receive so often as we do; or, may be you do n't smoke in her drawing-rooms?" said Julia; but she was soon silenced by an authoritative

"Hold your tongue, madam! none of your impertinence!"

At their marriage, Lord De Clifford had only settled 5000*l.* upon his wife, upon the plea of his present embarrassments, and his intention of doing more, should he ever become the possessor of Blichingly; but three years afterwards, one of the trustees to

her marriage settlement having died, and Mr. Herbert Grimstone being the only surviving one, Lord De Clifford soon worked upon his wife's compassion, by descriptions of his pecuniary distress, to relinquish that munificent sum, to which arrangement the trustee consented, without even appealing to her to know if such was her wish.

The frequency of Lord De Clifford's elections was ruinous in the extreme, and displeased his mother greatly, or rather the line of politics he had adopted; for she being, as she always styled herself, "a landed proprietor," thought it incumbent on her to be a Tory, and therefore looked upon her son's political principles as waifs upon her manor, which she had a perfect right to pound within her own pale of restriction, whenever it was in her power to erect a barrier to their career; consequently no electioneering funds were to be expected from her. On the contrary, she always made a point on those occasions of withdrawing the allowance she made him, in consideration of the mortgage on the Grimstone estate: and then followed, "fast and fierce," reproaches of his ingratitude in going contrary to the wishes of her who had brought him up so tenderly and so carefully.

She forgot that when she took him to Eton he did not like the *Keateon* physiognomy, and so declared to Eton he would not go. Nor did he, for his kind parent sent him to Harrow instead. At a later period, upon his private tutor finding fault with something he had done, he quietly and coolly knocked him down! Then came his maternal guardian angel, and took him away, saying she was sure Mr. Lilburn (the tutor) must have insulted him grossly, and she should expose him every where.

Now, causes will produce effects, and no wonder the twig so bent proved rather unmanageable afterwards; but knowing, as she did, that an English peerage was Lord De Clifford's "thought by day and dream by night," she was puzzled beyond measure to divine why he should labour so indefatigably to subvert the powers that be, and desecrate all existing institutions; for she was ignorant of that almost universally known truth, that there is no hypocrisy like political hypocrisy—no tyrant like a democrat—and no placeman like a patriot.

Your true liberal deals with the people as Charles the Twelfth did with the Russians: under the guise of protection and redress, he uses all his dexterity and adroitness to turn their own arms against them, and instruct him how to become their conqueror; when too late, they find their mistake in exchanging the harmless inertness of a King Log, for the active destructiveness of a King Stork.

Now Herbert Grimstone, on the contrary, had always been a staunch Tory, as long as there had been a close borough in exist-

ence; but no sooner had they fallen victims to the alphabetical pestilence of schedules "A" and "B," than his political steps began to limp about upon the crutches of liberal whiggism—steering timidly and totteringly between the monsyllabic Scylla and Charybdis of "aye" and "no," and resolutely shutting his ears against the siren voices of principle or consistency. Demosthenes said of the Pythian oracle, that it philipized; and from the moment the Reform Bill began to thrive, Herbert Grimstone liberalized; but when it and the Catholic question were both carried, and "a second Daniel came to judgment," suffocating the British senate into silence with "flowers of the earth," and dazzling them into blindness with gems of the sea, then, and not till then, Herbert Grimstone radicalized.

And who could blame him? His grand-mother's 80,000*l.* were gone—his friend Lord Shuffleton's rotten borough was gone—his own credit was gone—so that he had no alternative but St. Stephen's or the King's Bench.

And, oh, the choice! what patriot can doubt,
Of seals with rattling, or of jails without?

The worst of it is, that every advantage is bought with a price in this "best of all possible worlds:" the change that had come over the spirit of his politics, was another hold loosened on his chance of Blichingly. Something must be done to propitiate his mother, without offending his brother, as he was a great friend and supporter of Lord Denham's, who was the cynosure of their political hemisphere. So he took to making his mother presents, begging of her to choose his pocket-handkerchiefs; eating bad dinners at five o'clock with her once a-month, and calling her *mamma*.

This did very well to fill up the interstices of her good graces, but still there was a grand "coup" wanting to produce something decisive; and he had not been a diplomatist for eight years, without knowing that nothing had so good a chance of clenching an advantage, as assuming a great appearance of conciliatory generosity and sacrifice, when any of the other negotiating powers had been guilty of defalcation from the constituted authorities.

His brother had married against his mother's consent, *ergo*, he should be on the point of doing the same, but, from his overpowering sense of filial duty and affection, should, on the very threshold of happiness, relinquish his dearest hopes.

Accordingly, one day after dinner, at the end of a three weeks' acquaintance, he proposed for an admiral's daughter of the name of Erdley. Though penniless and a little deformed, with a slight cast in one eye, she was a very amiable girl, and had never been guilty of any folly but that of liking Herbert Grimstone. However, luckily her heart was not made of that sort of brittle devotion that breaks at desertion. Lady De Clifford was duly applied to for

her consent, and as duly refused it. Again and again she was entreated, but in vain. Herbert wrote an affecting letter to his adored Caroline, saying, that however he might and should suffer, he would die sooner than subject the pride of one he loved better than life to the humiliation of entering a family where she would not be appreciated!

That night he left London for Paris, accompanied by Mademoiselle Célestine, a French actress; wrote to his mother from thence for six weeks, on black-edged paper; went every night to Frascati's; dined every day at the Rocher, or the Café de Paris (except when he dined out), and at the end of six months returned to London, and assured "his dearest mamma" that, much as it had cost him, he felt far happier in having obliged her, than he could possibly have done by gratifying his own wishes.

This certainly was a great point gained, and his purse had no longer that consumptive appearance which Paris invariably occasions; but "all that's bright must fade." One luckless morning he forgot an appointment he had made with his mother to be in Bruton-street by twelve o'clock, to pass sentence upon a groom she was about to hire, and went to the levee instead. The newspapers betrayed his secret, so that when he called the next day he was not admitted.

The same fate awaited him for five months, with the agreeable addition of having his allowance stopped, thereby showing,

"What mighty contests rise from trivial things."

This was the time for Lord De Clifford to step forward with his delicate attentions, and regain the ground he had lost. He had determined upon going abroad, wishing to escape from the vexatious consequences resulting from an event he had long ardently wished for, namely, the birth of a son; but, alas! the little unfortunate was not destined to appropriate to itself the honours of his house, as its mother was a poor girl of seventeen, in the village of Blichingly, of the name of Mary Lee. From the moment the Dowager Lady De Clifford had been made acquainted with the circumstance, she had, with her usual maternal affection, done every thing in her power to assist her son in ridding himself of his poor victim's importunities, by calling her "a vile forward hussey;" threatening her with the parish authorities, and ejecting her father from a little farm he rented; but, unfortunately, these well-meant exertions only tended to ensure a contrary effect from that which they were designed to produce: for the poor girl, who had submitted without a murmur to every privation and reproach, no sooner found that her child was likely to become a sacrifice, than she redoubled her appeals to its unnatural father, which he humanely determined to put an end to, by retreating beyond the reach of her importunities.

Neither was his exemplary mother without her own individual sorrows at this juncture; for having had a living fall vacant some months before, she had refused it to a very worthy clergyman in the neighbourhood, thinking he was too much of the gentleman to be as completely under her control as she thought desirable, and so gave it accordingly to a miserably poor relation of Mr. Tymmons's, rejoicing in the euphonest cognomen of Hoskins. This presentation had, *primâ facie*, the appearance of a great charity towards Hoskins, but his patroness was too shrewd a person to act without a motive. The fact was, the tithe being worth about 100*l.* a-year, she meant him to accept a modus of 35*l.*; but, unfortunately, he being, too, like herself, of a mean, sordid, grasping, disposition, totally devoid of gratitude, answered this proposition by instantly bringing an action against her in the Ecclesiastical Court for simony, which he followed up by every species of vulgar personal annoyance he could invent, so that her son found her more inclined than he could have anticipated to accompany him to Italy, which, as may be supposed, was an additional martyrdom to poor Julia.

CHAPTER IX.

Membris intus positis delere licebit

Quod non edideris: nescit vox missa reverti.

Q. HORATII FLACCI. *Epistola ad Pisones.*

Moulded by her—her son to manhood grown,

She now can claim his vices as her own.

The oath in any way or form you please,

I stand resolved to take it.—MASSINGER'S *Duke of Milan.*

A GERMAN writer has observed, that “Luther knew very well what he was about when he threw the inkstand at Satan’s head, for there is nothing that the devil hates like ink.” In this, at least, Lord De Clifford’s maternal progenitor resembled his Satanic majesty, for nothing on earth she so much dreaded, and consequently hated, as the idea of anonymous letters about her being disseminated, or of being made the subject of a paragraph in a newspaper. Poor lady! she was really to be pitied, for she had all her life been inverting Plato’s maxim, “That in seeking others’ good we find our own;” as in seeking others’ harm, she invariably found hers.

She had thought to save the Rev. Nathaniel Peter Hoskins trouble, by condensing his tithe of 100*l.* per annum into 35*l.*, and a simonious suit decided against her in the Ecclesiastical Court had been the result. She had wished to make farmer Jenkins drain the hedges and re-thatch the barn at Rushworth farm, solely for his own comfort (but wholly at his own expense); whereupon he

had the impertinence to employ an attorney, who clearly proved that, according to the terms of the lease, the repairs of draining, thatching, etc., devolved entirely upon her ladyship, and were entirely compulsory obligations, which brought forth the before-alluded-to insolent letter from farmer Jenkins, wherein he threatened to publish the whole transaction, with episodes in the —shire “Courant,” if she did not instantly desire Mr. Grindall, her steward, to have the aforesaid draining and thatching put in hand.

By the same packet had also come an obsequious and admonitory letter from the faithful Tymmons, putting her on her guard as to the machinations of his “never-to-be-sufficiently-deprecated, ungrateful, and degenerate kinsman, the Rev. Nathaniel Peter Hoskins, “who had not only warmly espoused the cause of Mary Lee, in his pastoral capacity of guardian to the parish morals, but had actually joined the thatching and draining cabal of the Jenkinists. But,” continued Mr. Tymmons, in his able and eloquent epistle, in which he appeared deeply to have studied Aristotle’s receipt for good writing, namely, “to speak like the common people, and think like the wise”—“but bad as these here two hitches is, they ain’t without a remedy neither; for as I was a saying to Mr. Grindall last night, when we was a drinking your ladyship’s health in a glass of the very best Blichingly ale I ever tasted,—and thanks to your goodness, my lady, I’ve tasted many,—that there is Bring-’em-down-Dick, as we calls Richard Brindal, the under-keeper, as was discharged for poaching Christmas twelvemonth, might be got to marry the girl, and say the child is his; if so be my lord would come down with a matter of 200/., which, in my humble opinion (but with all due deference to your ladyship, who, of course, always knows best), it would be well worth his lordship’s while to do; as Mister Hoskins—I mean that eternal disgrace, that flaw in our family—is actually drawing up a pamphlet on the subject, which the vulgar wretch says he shall keep under his lee, till the next Triverton election; and then if my lord stands, or even Mr. Herbert, it will be a smasher. But I beg your ladyship’s pardon for repeating this here venomous viciousness: nothing but a wish to place your ladyship on your ladyship’s guard, so as that you may circumvent the villain, and enable my lord to rise above it bright and resplendent, as I have often seen the sun do from the Thames just above Eel Pie Island, could induce me to offend your ladyship’s eyes with such words.

“I was at Blichingly last evening—the Swedish turnips have taken well, but Mr. Grindall thinks the Norfolk wheat too coarse, and the geese won’t eat the stubble. Sorry to say, two bucks and a doe were found shot at the east end of the park yesterday, and the black swan has killed one of the white ones. Hoskins had

the effrontery to ask John Oaks, the new under-gardener, for a few grains of the Russian parsley-seed last week, which he very properly refused, telling him he'd see him d—d first; upon which Hoskins swore he was drunk, and had him fined five shillings.

"I trouble your ladyship with this little anecdote of John Oaks, knowing that that justice which invariably leads your ladyship to punish vice, equally leads you to reward virtue.

"Mrs. Tymmons begs her humble, dutiful respects to your ladyship, whom we both sincerely hope is quite well, as well as my lord and little miss, who, we hear, is the very born image of your ladyship. Beauty is all very well, but beauty won't last for ever: so that she may have the beauties of your ladyship's mind as well, is the humble hope of your ladyship's faithful, grateful, and obliged servant to command till death,

"ANTHONY ALGERNON TYMMONS."

This budget induced Lady De Clifford to summon her son to a cabinet council, which she opened in a manner that Machiavelli might have envied, and Prince Talleyrand despaired of equalling. The mother and son knew each other too well, whatever might be the imminent danger of their respective dilemmas, ever to commit the candid imbecility of asking a favour, when they had the power of making it appear that they were conferring an obligation; and as both perfectly coincided in the French philosopher's opinion, that "words were given to us to conceal our thoughts," they invariably used theirs accordingly.

"Well, ma'am," said the latter, as he slammed the door after him, flung himself into a chair with his hat on, yawned sonorously, and placed his feet upon the table,—"I suppose you have sent to me about this Rushworth Farm business. I really don't see what the d—l you can do—I suppose you'll have to knock under at last; so you had better make a virtue of necessity, to stop Jenkins's mouth, and say that, on looking over the lease, you find Grindall (for do n't commit yourself) was mistaken, and therefore you will order the repairs to be made, and are sorry there should have been so long a delay."

"Oh! my dear," said the affectionate mother, "it is very little consequence about the Rushworth Farm. I sent for you upon another business—about that 'ere tiresome Mary Lee. She is threatening to expose every thing; and then your character might suffer."

"My character!" shouted Lord De Clifford, in a voice almost inarticulate with rage, as he started on his feet, and stamped at his terrified parent, who stood trembling like an amateur wizard—a Tycho in the black art, that had raised a demon she had neither the power to exorcise nor control,—"my character, madam! who dare impeach it?—It is as undeserving of censure, as it is superi or

to and beyond it. Is that name which has been unsullied for a thousand years, and which has derived additional lustre since it has centred in me—is it, I say, to be tarnished by a village calumny, filtered through the ravings of a low-born peasant, who ought to feel it her only source of pride that I had ever looked at her?"

"Very true, my dear," responded the virtuous and sensible matron; "but you see this here Hoskins is such a wretch: he's a drawing up some horrid pamphlet, which he threatens to publish at the next Triverton election, should either you or Herbert stand; and at these elections people are so scurrilous and treacherous, there is no knowing what may be said; and I thought if Hoskins"—

"There it is," interrupted her son, as he paced the room, with his hands behind his back, and his hat slouched over his eyes: "you *would* give the living to that blackguard, when I wanted you to give it to young Dinely, which would have obliged Herbert, as Lord Shuffleton had always been so kind to him; and Dinely's a capital fellow—thinks of nothing but his hounds and a good bottle of claret—and as he is sure of being a bishop before he dies, he would have let you make ducks and drakes of the tithes."

"Indeed, my dear, it is shocking to think how one suffers for a good action in this world: so charitable as it was of me to give the living to that 'ere Hoskins, when Mr. Moreton applied for it, and every one speaks so well of him! But I can't say I like those popular people; I think they must be so artful; besides, he's rather methodistical and particular. But let us think what can be done about this here terrible pamphlet."

"Done! why, I'll write to Clarridge, the d—d Triverton printer, and tell him I'll prosecute him if he dares publish any think of the sort."

"Oh! my dear, you are much too open and unsuspicious—that would never do; because in the first place, that would commit you more; and in the next place, Hoskins could get it published elsewhere; but"—

"But what, ma'am?—Then I'll break every bone in that rascally Hoskins's skin."

"I'm sure, my dear, your just indignation is not to be wondered at, and does *vaust* credit to your head and *hort*; but you always was so *vaustly sperited* and high-minded; but it do n't do with those sort of people; you should always compass them with a net before you attack them with a spear; that is, never attack them before you are quite sure that they have no means either of defence or escape."

"There is some sense in that, ma'am. But what do you want me to do, then?"

"Why, my dear, it strikes me (for this candid and veracious lady would not even give her faithful friend and counsellor,

Mr. Tymmons, the credit of his plot)—it strikes me that you had better give some man a couple of hundred pounds to marry the girl, and so get rid of her: but first make him promise to say that the child is his; and then you can write a letter to Clarridge, the editor of the 'Courant,' assuring him you know nothing of Mary Lee, but, hearing she was miserably poor, have given her that money as a dower, which circumstance he can put in the county paper, and it will sound uncommonly generous on your part; and Grindall shall have my orders to send him half a buck before he receives your letter, which will prepare him to justify you to every one."

"That's all very fine, ma'am; but d—n it! who's to be got to marry the girl?"

"Why, I was a thinking, my dear, that that 'ere Brindal, that I turned away for poaching some time ago, would do any thing for 200*l*."

"Yes, and a pretty way I should commit myself, by exacting a promise of secrecy from such a fellow as that, who, for a quarter of the sum, in a case of necessity, would betray every thing!"

"My dear, you are naturally so irritated at the villanous threats of that wretch Hoskins, that you do not take time to understand me. I never meant that you should compromise yourself by having any dealings with Brindal; but I thought I could give Mr. Tymmons (of whose honesty and secrecy I have every reason to have the highest opinion) a hint to negotiate the business; and when he had got him publicly to own the child, then give him the money, which would be better and safer than giving it to the girl, as that might look suspicious; and in giving it to Brindal, Mr. Tymmons could say that I had discovered he was not guilty of the fault for which I had discharged him, and therefore that you, as well as myself, wished to make him every reparation in our power. Besides, my dear, doing it in this way would have another advantage—the circumstance would do *vaustly* well to put into a paragraph, as a set-off to one of those eternal flourishes about the blankets and coals Lord Sudbury gives to the poor of Triverton every Christmas."

"Well, my dear ma'am," said the obedient son, affectionately taking his mother's hand, "I think you have arranged every thing very diplomatically, so I shall leave it entirely to you."

"Ah, my dear! depend upon it there is no friend like a mother, and this it was that made me so much against your marriage. I saw how you was throwing yourself away; but there's no putting old heads on young shoulders."

"I can only lament, my dear ma'am," said the affectionate son, gallantly kissing the hand he still held, "that, being blessed with such a mother, I have not always followed the advice which was dictated by her superior sense."

“Well, my dear, let by-gones be by-gones; I’ll write to Mr. Tymmons, if you’ll just write a line to Clarridge.”

Lord De Clifford sat down and indited the following epistle:

“DEAR SIR,—You may probably have heard some time ago of a man of the name of Richard Brindal, an under gamekeeper of my mother’s, being discharged from her service for poaching; she has since discovered that he was wrongfully accused by a rival keeper, and she is therefore anxious (with that justice and generosity which have ever distinguished her) to make him every reparation in her power; for which reason, hearing he is about to be married to a young woman of the name of Lee, in the village of Blichingly, she has given him £100, and begged of me to add another hundred to it, which I have much pleasure in doing. I should feel much obliged by your making these facts public, through the medium of your valuable paper—not from any desire of proclaiming my mother’s generosity, for that is a proceeding from which I know she would shrink, but solely from the desire of vindicating and re-establishing the character of the poor man. I understand Brindal has had a liaison with the girl he is about to marry; the child, which was the result of it, Mr. Hoskins, with his usual impudent, unchristian-like, but for that reason perfectly clerical, malice, has thought fit to tax me with being the father of—an accusation, which I hope I need not assure you, on the honour of a gentleman, is perfectly false, and this you have my authority to state, should the calumny gain ground. Hoping Mrs. Clarridge and your young people are quite well,

“Believe me, dear Sir, very faithfully yours,

“DE CLIFFORD.”

“There, ma’am, will that do?” said Lord De Clifford, pushing over this precious “morceau” to his mother, who after she had perused it said,

“Nothing can be better, my dear; but you do write so *vaustly* well! There is only one thing: do you think it quite prudent to call Hoskins’s conduct ‘perfectly clerical?’ I’m sure I speak disinterestedly, for his conduct has been enough to disgust one with all religion; but it might be brought against you at one of those horrid elections, and you know, my dear, that I am a stanch tory, for I really think we landed proprietors ought to support church and state.”

“Fudge! my dear ma’am: what the d—I have the church and the parsons to do with the state?—All that is such d—d nonsense!”

“Perhaps not the parsons, my dear (and I’m sure no one has more cause to dislike them than I have), but certainly church and state always has gone, always does, and always will go together. You know, my dear, we have the thirty-nine Articles, the Magna Charta, and the Habeas Corpus Act for that. But we are forgetting things of more consequence,—you did not mention the venison in your letter to Clarridge.”

“I thought it better not, for should he show the letter, it might look like bribery.”

“Very just observation, my dear; I did not think of that.” And now came the pith and marrow of this long conference, namely, her ladyship’s own business, which, to make it appear of the least

possible importance, she put off to the last moment. "Oh, by the by, George," said she, just as her son was about to seal his letter, "be so good as to add a postscript, begging Clarridge will contradict in every possible way any stories about Jenkins and the Rushworth Farm; say it was all a mistake of Grindall's—that I had it rectified the moment it came to my knowledge. I'm sure none but landed proprietors can know the trouble of landed property," concluded her ladyship, with a deep sigh, as though she were personally labouring under the weight of all her own acres. This veracious protocol having been added to the before-mentioned truths, the bell was rung, and the letter duly despatched. Lord De Clifford having arranged all his own business entirely to his satisfaction, was preparing to leave the room, when his amiable parent said,

"Stop a minute, my dear, I want to speak to you. I've been thinking your establishment is a great deal more expensive than it need be; not that I would on any account deprive you of any comfort, but really I must say that 'ere Beryl, Lady De Clifford's maid, has a great deal too much wages. I understand she gets four-and-twenty guineas a-year; now I only give Frump sixteen—there's eight guineas saved at once."

"Yes, my dear ma'am, but Beryl is a very good hairdresser and milliner, I believe."

"Pack of stuff! I really think Miss Neville's maid might wait upon her sister; I'm sure she never had a maid to herself before she married; but those sort of people always give themselves the most airs; besides, it is a very bad plan to let servants live too long with one, for they begin to fancy one cannot do without them. That 'ere Beryl, from living so long with Lady De Clifford, is grown quite disrespectful. Only fancy her saying to the servants that she loves her mistress as well as if she was her sister! So vaustly free and impertinent! I'm sure no servant has ever presumed to speak in that way of me;—and then she tells Frump that she keeps all Lady De Clifford's keys, and buys every thing for her, which, I am sure, is enough to spoil any servant in the world. I never let Frump buy me any thing except a pair of gloves once, for which she charged me half-a-crown, and I should have discharged her instantly, only I wanted her to find out something about a cook I had at the time, for it was such evident cheater, as I never paid but eighteenpence for my gloves; and since Mrs. Tymmons took me to Sewell and Crosse's, I only pay a shilling; and as for keys, I'm sure I could not sleep if I thought Frump had a single key of mine in her possession."

"Why, to tell you the truth, my dear ma'am," said Lord De Clifford, rather alarmed by this insight into his wife's extravagance, "it is not so much for Lady De Clifford's accommodation that I

allow her to keep Beryl, but the fact is, travelling, she is a perfect treasure to me. Neither Dorio nor Carlton can ever remember any thing, and she never forgets a single thing; then she has found out a way of packing my things without rumpling them, which neither of those two dolts can do; she makes me capital tobacco-bags, that do n't come open at the top, and much nicer 'sachets' than I can buy; and I never had a nightcap I could wear till she made them; and so cheap, for I only pay her ten shillings for what I used to pay Ludlem a pound, and much better velvet too. In short, she is more my valet than either Carlton or Dorio. I think she has an impertinent manner though, as her excuse for keeping me waiting a quarter of an hour the other day was, that she must attend to Lady De Clifford first; for which reason I shall discharge her when I get to England."

"Oh! my dear, I was not aware that she was of the least use to you; if I had, I'm sure I should have been the last person to wish you to part with her. Indeed, if you had not told me of her impertinent speech the other day, I should have given her a new gown, to make her more attentive to you. You'll forgive my mentioning the circumstance, but I thought it was extravagant in Lady De Clifford to give her such wages."

"Oh! my dear ma'am, I'm sure I'm very grateful to you, and I see the justice of all you have said."

So saying, this amiable mother and son separated till dinner; the former to calculate how she could manage to reduce Frump's board wages, the latter to enjoy the intellectual feast of Mademoiselle D'Antoville's powers of listening.

CHAPTER X.

My heart is mad; why not my brain? Oh, witch!
That flaming Hymen now would quench his torch,
Or Hate betwixt thy fool and thee would set
Double divorce for ever! Shall I go?
I *cannot* quit her: but, like men who mock
The voice of thunder, tarry until—I die!
Shall I not go?—I will not, though the tongues
Of chiding virtue rail me straight to stone.
Here will I stand, a statue fix'd and firm,
Before the fiery altar of my love,
Both worshipper and martyr!—BARRY CORNWALL.

"YES, I will leave this place," said Mowbray, one morning, about a fortnight after the party to Como; "it is madness—is it not something worse?—of me to remain. What can it—what must it all end in? My eternal wretchedness certainly, if she is what I think, what I feel—ay, what I know her to be! What a fate is mine! Why should the only human being in the world

that can make life desirable to me, be the only one that I must not, at least, that I ought not to think of? Why was I born? Why can I not fathom the dark mystery of my own existence? Of what jarring atoms am I composed! The crude and half-formed germs of good within me seem as if the sun which was to vivify and expand them had never shone till now. Oh! mystery of mysteries! can that which softens and improves my whole nature be in itself wrong? Can crime, whose fruits are so bitter, bear such fair blossoms? Can sin, whose 'wages are death,' be the only thing which has taught me to live? or is my curse to be a *oneness*, both of fate and feeling? All nature owns a fair variety—light has its shade—heat its alternate cold—spring its showers—summer its suns—toil its rest; but I know no change: the unfathomed essence of one feeling absorbs all others; and with this feeling my heart aches and burns, and maddens, like a lidless eye beneath a scorching sun! I have played the fool's game, and gambled with my fate; all is gone—all lost—all sacrificed to this one master-passion, and I am left without any of the small change of sensations and pursuits, which enable others to support existence!"

So argued, or rather raved, Mowbray, till his hand was actually on the bell to order preparations to be made for his immediate departure. In the Herculean labour of pulling an Italian bell, the bunch of withered violets that Lady De Clifford had dropped some time before, fell from his bosom, where they had been deposited ever since the day he had possessed himself of them. The sight of them changed the whole current of his intentions: he returned to his former sophistry, "that, in continuing his intercourse with Julia, no one would be injured but himself!" Therefore, with that Curtius-like devotion which a man always evinces to secure the gratification of his own selfishness, as soon as the bell was answered, instead of asking for his courier, he called for some Seltzer water, and ordered his horses, which, when they came round, conveyed him to the palazzo.

But what were Mowbray's conflicts to Julia's? He only struggled against the sorrow of his love—she had to shrink from the sin of hers: he looked to the penalties resulting from that love here—she to the punishment that awaited it hereafter. She had all her woman's purity to magnify and blacken her fault; he had all his man's sophistry of custom to lessen and lighten his:—his love, refine, restrain it as he might, was still but that whirlwind of impulse, passion, and selfishness, which a man's love always is; while hers was a sort of monomania of the heart, differing from that of the brain in this, that while that of the head consists in imagining ourselves to be something which we are not, that of the heart employs all its delusions upon another.

But, exclusive of this ill-fated attachment, which Lady De Clif-

ford would not own even to herself, she had quite enough to make her wretched : for an eloquent writer has remarked, that “ When a woman of genius is indued with real sensibility, her sorrow is multiplied by her faculties themselves : she makes discoveries in her afflictions, as in the rest of nature, and the miseries of her heart become inexhaustible ; the more ideas she has, the more she feels it.”

Frank, generous, and affectionate, she met with nothing in her husband’s family but deceit, meanness, and coldness. Like all intellectual women, she was of a social disposition, and half her life was condemned to solitude and silence. Clever men have a thousand ways of making their talents available,—science, politics, law, war, literature, all are open to them ; therefore, with them, “ self-love and social” are not necessarily the same : but a woman has but one sphere wherein to enjoy her talents—society. It may be urged that literature is equally open to them as to the other sex :—not so ; for, generally speaking, women have either fathers, brothers, or husbands, who would shrink from having an authoress for a daughter, sister, or wife ; and the reason is obvious : it arises from a fear that they might either disgrace or distinguish themselves,—two results equally distasteful to the pride of man.

No one could possibly have less desire “ *de briller*” than Lady De Clifford ; yet it was not pleasant to her pride to be commanded into silence at home, in order to make way for the platitudes of her mother and brother-in-law, or to be frowned into it abroad, for fear of occasioning a colloquial eclipse of her husband. Still, had she continued to live under his absolute monarchy, her sense of duty would have enabled her to support with cheerfulness many of the rigours of his matrimonial code ; but she had now to endure all the hydra oppressions of a triumvirate, for Mr. Herbert Grimstone had joined his amiable relatives at Milan, and had resumed his share (by no means an inconsiderable one) in the domestic legislation of his brother’s family.

In person he was as diminutive as Lord De Clifford was tall ; his hair was dark and thin, though he had a habit of extending his hand to encompass the half dozen capillary ornaments that graced each temple, as widely as though he had been about to grasp a world ; his eyes were small, and of that sinister and one-expressed kind which read others, while they say nothing themselves ; his nose was aquiline ; his face long, narrow, and pitted with the small-pox ; but Marmontel has described him perfectly in his portrait of the Marquis de Lisban. “ *Heureusement,*” for I could not do it half so well. “ *C’était une de ces figures froides qui vous disent : me voilà ; c’était une de ces vanités gauches qui manquent sans cesse leur coup. Il se piquait de tout, et n’était bon à rien ; il prenait la parole, demandait silence, suspendait l’attention, et*

disait une platitude ; il riait avant de conter, et personne ne riait de ses contes : il visait souvent à être fin, et il tournait si bien ce qu'il voulait dire, qu'il ne savait plus ce qu'il disait. Quand il ennuyait les femmes, il croyait les rendre rêveuses : quand elles s'amusaient de ses ridicules, il prenait cela pour des agaceries."

Towards his superiors (and, morally speaking, they would have been nearly every one with whom he came in contact) he evinced the most ubiquitous servility, which, to do him justice, he extended to the meanest individual, the moment he found they were capable of being of the slightest use to him : indeed, in some instances, his philanthropy deserved the greatest credit, for the vivid interest he took in persons, of whose very existence he had appeared ignorant five minutes before.

When Mowbray reached the palazzo, he found the party divided "à l'anglaise," that is to say, the men at one end of the room, talking to each other, as being alone capable of understanding and appreciating the wonders of masculine intellect ! and the women at the other end, suitably employed, raising mimic parterres on German canvass. Herbert Grimstone was sitting on a tabouret, with one of his feet in one of his hands, and his hat on—a privilege the Grimstones seemed to dispute with the Kinsale family, as they invariably retained theirs in the presence of the royalty of nature, namely, the softer sex. Lord De Clifford and Mr. Seymour were disputing upon the merits of Lord Bolingbroke, whilst ever and anon, Herbert Grimstone chimed an assent to some observation of his brother's, when he could spare any attention from looking over an octavo volume he had just spawned about Timbuctoo. Innumerable were the mistakes of the printer ; but the greatest mistake was having printed it at all.

"Man is an imitative animal," says Buffon : (so are monkeys for that matter !) but Herbert Grimstone was the most imitative of his imitative race ; his very vices were not original, while even his person was but a base copy of humanity.

Unfortunately for him, or rather for the world, he had a cousin, one of the greatest geniuses the age had produced, and who was as successful as he was distinguished as an author. Herbert had for some years, while abroad, contented himself with the "dolce far niente" of usurping his cousin's well-deserved fame—in Germany that fame was at its height—consequently the name of Grimstone became a sort of "passe par-tout ;" and on one occasion, as Herbert was proceeding up the Rhine, a young student, reading his name chrysographed on a red morocco despatch-box, deferentially advanced, cap in hand, begging to know whether he had the honour of addressing a relation of the great Grimstones ? To which Herbert modestly replied that *he* was the great Grimstone ! Great was the poor student's delight : he did not know how to make

enough of the two hours that intervened previous to their landing; and when they separated, they did so mutually pleased: Herbert, inflated with all the homage due to his cousin, which had been paid by mistake, or rather through the medium of a falsehood to his vanity; and the student charmed with the affability and condescension of so great a man; though, as he afterwards confessed, his conversation was very inferior to his books; but then people cannot do every thing, consequently the greatest genius cannot "talk a book;" besides, he further consoled himself with the idea that his father had once had the inexpressible felicity of travelling with Herr Jerusalem, the original of Goëthe's Werter, and found him so little remarkable, nay, so almost deficient, that had he not blown his brains out, or rather had not the author of "Faust" recorded the event, no one would have ever known that he had any.

When Herbert returned to England, unfortunately for his hitherto successfully-pursued plan, he found his cousin's identity a matter of too much certainty to allow him to benefit any longer by its apocryphal appropriation; he, therefore, sagaciously deemed that by blotting four or five hundred sheets of paper, and publishing them when blotted, he should "*in propria personâ*," become an author; and once that, the confusion between him and his cousin would be a natural result, and when either his absurdities or obscenities were arraigned, it was easy among the uninitiated to say, "*C'est Marc-Aurèle qui parle, ce n'est pas moi*;" and vice versa, when any good things were to be claimed;—his name procured him some severe castigations in reviews that would not otherwise have noticed him, every lash of which his vanity attributed to envy, on the part of hired labourers in the fields of literature.

His work on Timbuctoo, entitled "An Inquiry into the past, present, and future State of the World in general, and Timbuctoo in particular," was meant to be statistical, philological, physiological, philomathic, and political; in short, a condensation of all the "logics," and all the "ology's;" but, unfortunately, tautology and acryology were the only ones thoroughly exemplified: throughout he had mistaken free-thinking for philosophy, grossness for wit, mutilation for analytic, and laxity for liberality.

As we have before stated, he was employed in looking over this encyclopedia of his own absurdity, when Mowbray entered. Mowbray was *the* man about town, therefore Herbert's reception of him was a happy mixture of cordiality and cringe, for which he might have taken out a patent, as no one else ever possessed it in so eminent and perfectionized a degree.

"You are just come in time," said Lord de Clifford, "to be umpire between me and Seymour, on the virtues and talents of Lord Bolingbroke. Seymour does not give him credit for that univer-

sality of talent which I must say I think he evinced upon all occasions."

"I confess," said Mowbray, "I am of Seymour's opinion. I have always looked upon Lord Bolingbroke as the very prince of charlatans, and think 'the all-pretending' would have been a much juster definition of him than 'the all-accomplished St. John;' even Swift complains of his affectation of the man of business, and his equal affectation of the man of pleasure. He was a mosaic of fop-stoic statesman and *littérature*; there was an eternal straining after effect, and nothing real about him, not even his scepticism; and his meanness in depreciating the indisputable learning of Bayle, that he might, with all the pedantry of a Scaliger, crib from him, has always appeared to me unpardonable."

"Do you not admire his 'Letters in Exile,' then?" ventured Herbert Grimstone.

"I cannot say that I do; they are so overlaid with laboured classical quotations, that the Cincinnatus tone he wishes to affect is utterly destroyed."

"You will at least allow," said Saville, "that he was a zealous and an active friend; for, during the three days of his administration, he made a point of obtaining from the queen the thousand pounds for Swift, which Lord Oxford had, with all his professions to the dean, failed in procuring."

"I allow that Lord Bolingbroke's hatred of Lord Oxford was so intense, that the desire of doing what he had not done, and 'se faisant valoir' thereupon, had more to do with this kind act than friendship for Swift."

"I cannot think so," said Lord De Clifford, "for how constant he was in his kindness to, and correspondence with Swift to the last!"

"Yes; and the greatest piece of want of feeling and bad taste he ever evinced, was in one of his letters on the death of Stella, at least only a little month after it, where he says to the dean, 'My wife sends you some fans just arrived from Lilliput, which you will dispose of to the present Stella, whosoever she may be.' Now considering, that badly and unpardonably as he had behaved to her, she was the only woman Swift had ever really loved (for his flirtation with Miss Van Homrigh was mere vanity and convenience), this was coarse and unfeeling; to say the least of it; but some persons are apt to make a great mistake when they gauge others' sincerity by their own."

"Oh, hang it!" said Lord De Clifford, "a great man is not to have his good feeling questioned from a slip of the pen about a d—d woman!"

"Thank you, in the name of the whole sex," said Mrs. Seymour, who, with Madame de A., and the rest of the ladies, had joined the coterie since Mowbray's arrival.

"I do n't know that," said Saville; "I have a vulgar prejudice in favour of a man's extending a deferential worship, and consequent respect to the whole sex, or I do n't think he can behave well to one."

"Ah! 'vous prêchez pour votre paroisse,'" laughed Madame de A.

"And you are my diocesan," whispered Saville to Fanny.

"Nolo episcopari," said she, smiling, "for I shall not allow of any such polytheistic doctrines, as you have professed."

"You know very well," said he, "that you have long converted me to pure deism, and that all the worship that I had given to many I now pour out to one. What more do you want, tyrant?"

"To get rid of your nonsense, and hear what your sensible friend is saying," said Fanny, as she laughingly placed herself on the sofa beside Mowbray, who was summing up his evidence against Lord Bolingbroke, as being such a bad husband. "Lord Chatham," continued he, "expresses his surprise, on going to see Lord Bolingbroke when an old man at Battersea, to find him pedantic, fretful, and angry with his wife; but I am not the least surprised: there was no longer a motive for display—he was too old to recollect that Lord Chatham might perhaps record the latter fact, or else doubtless he would never have put it in his power to do so."

"D—d nonsense!" said Lord De Clifford, as he took his hat and walked out of the room.

Herbert Grimstone, who had been trying in vain for the last half-hour to get up a flirtation with Mrs. Seymour, soon followed his brother's example; for Saville and Mowbray were growing dreadfully agreeable, and he had a constitutional dislike to agreeable people, for the same reason that some persons dislike flowers in a room, because they consume too much of the oxygen necessary for their own respiration; and attention being the oxygen of vanity, Herbert Grimstone always suffered from the malaria of agreeability. So cramming a newspaper into his pocket, then stretching both his arms above his head, and yawning, he turned to Mrs. Seymour with an ironical smile and an air, which he meant to be that of a De Grammont, and said,

"I think I deserve credit for my self-denial, in being able to leave so much wit, and so much beauty."

"At least," replied his tormentor, "you deserve credit for your honesty in not, amid such a profusion, taking away a particle of either!" From that moment Mrs. Seymour did what is the easiest thing in the world for a pretty and a clever woman to do—namely, lost a dangler, and gained an enemy; but in this instance she had the bad taste to prefer the latter to the former.

Madame de A. had been very busy preparing for her masquerade.

rade, which was to take place at Venice early in the ensuing week ; and as she had determined upon having a game of piquet played with living cards, Fanny had been exerting all her inventive powers in designing dresses for the court cards that would not prevent their moving about. “Only fancy my having been so busy,” said she, “about those card dresses, that I have never opened that packet of books which came from England this morning. I wish some of you idle men would have the charity to read out to us poor industrious damsels—*do*, Mr. Mowbray, for I have been told by a particular friend of yours, that you read remarkably well.”

“So I do,” said Mowbray, laughing, “but I assure you my particular friend reads infinitely better.”

“A very just observation,” said Saville, in the Dowager Lady De Clifford’s voice, “and does credit to your *head* and *hort*.”

Every one laughed at Saville’s quotation and his admirable mimicry.

“When you have done being so *vaustly* civil to each other,” said Fanny, pursuing the same theme, “perhaps one of you will have the goodness to open that packet and see what’s in it.”

“There, my dear fellow, do you do it,” said Saville, pushing over the huge parcel to Mowbray ; “it will be a charity to employ you, and prevent your pulling all those poor innocent magnolias to pieces, which never did you the slightest harm.”

“That’s not true,” said Mowbray, “for they have given me a terrible headach.”

Julia raised her eyes from her work—“Pray, try some eau de Cologne,” said she, giving him a *flacon* out of her work-basket. He soon felt most miraculously relieved, and pronounced it the best eau de Cologne he had ever met with.

“Well, what books are these?” inquired Fanny, seeing that Mowbray was reading all the title-pages to himself.

“Every sort you can possible desire — memoirs, diaries, biography, novels, essays, magazines, poems, ‘ad infinitum,’—which will you have?”

“Oh, not poetry, certainly !” said every one unanimously ; “unless it is Moore’s, Mrs. Hemans’s, or L. E. L.’s.”

“You are wrong,” said Mowbray, “for I have opened upon some exceedingly pretty poetry, though written by a person whose name I nor you never heard before—a Mr. Charles Mackay.”

“The name is not euphonious, at all events,” said Saville.

“No, but the verses are.”

It has been remarked, that when we are under the influence of any particular passion or circumstances, we rarely open a book, which does not seem addressed directly to our situation. This had been the case with Mowbray, in opening the little volume in question ; besides, it was a favourite subterfuge of his, to make the

words of others speak for him : thoughts he dared not breathe to her—thoughts which he dared not own, even to himself—came with apparent guilelessness from another.—How much subtile, honeyed, yet deadly poison, had he by this means distilled into Julia's ear! how much danger had stolen through that low, deep, soft, wooing voice into the very lifesprings of its victim, like the plague-blast passing over the flowery vale of the Arno, which was rendered more destructive by the very sweets it acquired!(1) No wonder, then, that, on such occasions, there was a deep pathos in the tones of Mowbray's, at all times touching and beautiful, voice, which drew forth unqualified admiration from his auditors, and led poor Julia into the error of thinking that in her admiration of him, she was only indulging a general, and not a particular, feeling.

“Well,” said Fanny, “if it is not very long, we will allow you to read the poem you have volunteered to stand sponsor for.”

Mowbray was too anxious to express some of the thoughts contained in it to wait for another command; and having drawn his chair closer to the table, or, in other words, closer to Julia's, he began the following very beautiful

“PRAYER OF ADAM ALONE IN PARADISE.

“O Father, hear!

Thou know'st my secret thought,—
Thou know'st with love and fear
I bend before thy mighty throne,
And before thee I hold myself as nought.

Alas! I'm in the world *alone*!
All desolate upon the earth;
And when my spirit hears the tone,
The soft song of the birds in mirth,—
When the young nightingales
Their tender voices blend,
When from the flowery vales
Their hymns of love ascend;

Oh, then *I feel there is a void for me*,—
A bliss too little in this world so fair!
To thee, O Father, do I flee,
To thee for solace breathe the prayer!

And when the rosy morn
Smiles on the dewy trees,
When music's voice is borne
Far on the gentle breeze;
When o'er the bowers I stray,
The fairest fruits to bring,
And on thy shrine to lay
A fervent offering,—

(1) When the plague raged at Florence, in the thirteenth century, those who retired to Fiesole for safety, fell victims to a worse species of infection—from the pestilence gaining additional venom, by the atmosphere being so impregnated with the perfume of flowers.

Father of many spheres!

When bending thus before thy throne,
My spirit weeps with silent tears,

To think that I must pray *alone*!

And when at evening's twilight dim,

When troubled slumber shuts mine eye,

And when the gentle seraphim

Bend from their bright homes in the sky;

When angels walk the quiet earth,

To glory in Creation's birth;

Then, Father, in my dreams I see

A gentle being o'er me bent,

Radiant with love, and like to me,

But of a softer lineament:

I strive to clasp her to my heart,

That we may live and be but one,—

Ah! wherefore, lovely beam, depart?

Why must I wake and find thee gone?

Almighty! in thy wisdom high,

Thou saidst that when I sin, I *die*:

And once my spirit could not see

How that which *is* could cease to be.

Death was a vague unfathom'd thing,

On which the thought forbore to dwell;

But Love has oped its secret spring,

And *now* I know it well!

To die must be *to live alone*,

Unloved, uncherish'd, and unknown;

Without the sweet one of my dreams

To cull the fragrant flowers with me,—

To wander by the morning's beams,

And raise the hymn of thanks to *Thee*!

But, Father of the earth,

Lord of the boundless sphere!

If 'tis thy high unchanging will

That I should linger here,—

If 'tis thy will that I should rove

Alone o'er Eden's smiling bowers,

Grant that the young birds' song of love,

And the breeze sporting 'mong the flowers,

May to my spirit cease to be

A music and a mystery!

Grant that my soul no more may feel

The soft sounds breathing every where;

That Nature's voice may cease to hymn

Love's universal prayer!

For all around, in earth or sea,

And the blue heaven's immensity,

Whisper it forth in many a tone,

And tell me *I am all alone*!"

"Beautiful!" said Fanny; "beautiful!" echoed every one, except Julia; but she had made a great many false stitches in a rosebud she was embroidering;—she left the room to get some more silk, and when she returned, Mowbray was gone.

CHAPTER XI.

O ! undeveloped land,
 To where I fain would flee,
 What mighty hand shall break each band
 That keeps my soul from thee ?
 In vain I pine, and sigh
 To trace thy dells and streams ;
 They gleam but by the spectral sky
 That lights my shifting dreams.

* * * * *

From the German of LUDWIG TIEK.

If the bright lake lay stilly
 When whirlwinds arose to deform,—
 If the life of the lily
 Were charm'd against the storm,
 Thou mightest, though human,
 Have smiled through the saddest of years—
 Thou mightest, though woman,
 Have lived unacquainted with tears !

From the German of JOHANN THEODOR DRECHSLER.

THERE is but one real actual present on earth, — but one period in which we feel our own identity independent of our imagination, and that is the time we pass with the one we love : the mere sense of existence is then an all-sufficient happiness, and this sense it is which alone can rivet or create for us that vague thing, the present. The reason is obvious : then, and then only, the boundless void of the human heart is filled ; then alone we want nothing beyond what we have ; and this it is that constitutes the actual, the present. So all-pervading is this feeling, that, in the presence of a beloved object, we dread even thinking our own thoughts, lest the illusion, the spell of consciousness, which is then in itself happiness, should be broken ; lest the wild and swift-winged present should be startled into flight, never to return.

This mysterious presence alone has the power of bringing all our widely-ranged feelings, thoughts, and passions, into one focus ; quit it but a moment, and then do our jarring atoms again separate, to war within us like chaotic spirits struggling for pre-eminence ; —memory turning us back,—hope leading us forward,—jealousy maddening,—fear chaining,—suspense taunting,—despair paralyzing us ;—all lashing us over the shoals and quicksands of our own individuality, from the far but pleasant seas of the past, into the unknown and unfathomable ones of the future ! But the present—where is it ?—gone ! fallen, like a star from its sphere ; and we ask our hearts, but ask in vain, “ Will it ever return ?—will there ever again be a present for us ? ”

It was now the beginning of September, and Lord De Clifford had decided upon leaving Milan for Rome by the end of the month :

they were to take Venice in their way, on account of Madame de A.'s ball. It seemed to Julia as if this ball was to be the last place where she would meet, where she would be with, Mowbray. Twenty times a-day her lips repeated, "I hope it may; it is better that it should!" and then a chill ran through her veins, and a faintness stole over her, that seemed like the prelude to dissolution. It is one of the greatest punishments of illicit love, that it compels us to make a penthouse of our own hearts, for the two most corroding of human feelings—shame and sorrow. In all other afflictions we can claim and receive that greatest of earthly anodynes—sympathy; but unlawful love is a parricide, that stabs the heart which gave it birth: it occasions a sort of personal civil war between our conscience and our affections; and, like all other civil wars, it generally ends in the destruction of our best interests.

In order to banish the ever-recurring remembrance of Mowbray, Julia had tried, but tried in vain, to elicit a word, a look, however transient, of kindness from her husband: if he had shown, or even affected to show, the slightest interest in her, she felt she could resolutely have banished every unworthy feeling from her heart. But no; he preferred every one's, or any one's society to hers: they had not a thought, a feeling in common. She felt herself a sort of human spider, whose destiny it was to extract poison from every thing. She had all the disadvantages without any of the advantages of marriage; for to the most humiliating neglect, Lord De Clifford contrived to unite the most harassing and degrading surveillance. As *his* wife, he thought no one could pay her sufficient respect; but to herself individually, when he could separate her identity from her position, which he did with regard to his own family, no contempt was too offensive: the boundless laxity of his principles with regard to the privileges of his own sex led him not only into a total disregard of her feelings, but into a disregard for all the *convenances* of society: provided it gave him pleasure, he thought it his wife's duty (!) to feel a rebound of delight at seeing him make love to another woman before her face; and, as is always the case with men who frame such a liberal code for themselves, his ideas of female propriety were narrow and arbitrary, in an inverse ratio.

Their child was no cement between them, for its father looked upon it in no other light than that of an additional expense in his establishment. But there are no feelings so hardening and demoralizing as egotism and selfishness; and Lord De Clifford had both pre eminently. Egotism is indeed the theory of selfishness; and selfishness, the practice of that theory, about the only one, unfortunately, which human nature is infallible in carrying into action.

The night before they were to leave Milan, Julia had, with a

weakness that is human (but for that reason not the more pardonable), made a collection of all the gloves and ribbons she had worn on the days and evenings she had passed with Mowbray, and all

“ Those token-flowers, which tell
What words can never speak so well,”

which he had given her. She was ashamed and afraid that her maid should either see or suspect this transaction, and had therefore sealed them up herself, and was going to deposit them in her jewel-box in her dressing-room, when, at the head of the stairs, she met Beryl, looking as only ladies'-maids can look when they are “big with the fate of” hats, caps, blonds, and velvets, and the progress of their packing has been impeded by some unlucky “contretems.”

“I’m sorry to say, my lady,” said the irrate Abigail, “that, as usual, Mr. Herbert is with my lord in your dressing-room, smoking away, and spoiling every thing. I only just went down to supper (after Mr. Carlton had been up for me twice), and left the Imperial, with all your court dresses in it, wide open, and the cap-case, with your Huguenot chip hat—and the two new Moabite turbans, from Herbault’s,—all at sixes and sevens, not meaning to be away ten minutes—nor was I—for I never take a second glass of their nasty sour wine—and when I came up, I found my lord and Mr. Grimstone in full possession. I wish I’d had the sense to lock the door!”

“Never mind, Beryl; I’ll go to Lord De Clifford’s dressing-room.”

“Oh, but there’s no fire there, my lady, and you’ll be perished. The chimney smokes so, one can’t light a fire; that’s the reason they’re in your room. I’ve no patience with them,” muttered Beryl, as she took the light out of Lady De Clifford’s hand, and preceded her to little Julia’s room.

“I’ve no patience with them; I call it quite undelicate like—always muddling and molly-coddling in a lady’s dressing-room! But things is always ten times worse whenever Mr. Herbert’s here.”

“Thank you, Beryl, you may go,” said Lady De Clifford, as she flung herself into a “bergère” by her child’s bedside; “I do n’t want you any more to-night.”

“But, dear me, how ill you look, my lady! Pray let me get you something—a little salvolatile, or some arquebesade.”

“No, nothing, thank you, Beryl; it’s only a headach. I shall be better in the morning.”

“I wish they were all at the bottom of the sea, so I do!” said Beryl to herself as she closed the door, “for teasing of her as they do. But it’s all along of that wicked old woman—I know it is. But it will come home to her yet in some way or other, or my name is not Beryl; if it was only her conduct about poor Mary Lee.”

When Julia was alone, she burst into a paroxysm of tears, as she knelt down to kiss her sleeping child. "Poor little thing!" said she, "have I not you to love me and to love? and what more love ought I to want? Thank God, that you are a girl, too! You will never neglect or desert me—you are my child! I have then something belonging to me—something to care for me, dearer even than Fanny. Happy Fanny! innocent Fanny! how you would blush for your unworthy sister, could you see into her frail and erring heart! Oh! Father," continued she, passionately clasping her hands, and raising her streaming eyes to heaven, "pass away from me this great, this deadly sin; fill my heart with love of Thee only, and send down upon me thy grace, which has alone power to combat and to conquer the evil one within me!" The large hot tears that fell fast from Julia's eyes on the calm and velvet cheek of her sleeping child, caused the latter to stir: in doing so she opened and stretched out one of her little hands towards her mother. Child-like, she had gone to bed with a present Mowbray had given her, of a little Venetian chain and enamel watch. The design of the watch was two little angels' heads, with wings of brilliants and purple enamel, with the motto of "They will watch over you," encircling in a glory the angels' heads. She had clasped this trinket closely, but in opening her little hand it fell on her mother's bosom. The unhappy are always superstitious—for the same reason that a drowning wretch catches at a straw. Julia's eyes fell upon the words, "They will watch over you." To her excited feelings they seemed like a blessed and immediate answer to her prayer; and the prayer of thanks her heart now offered up was more fervent even than that of supplication which the same heart had uttered a few minutes before. Among the many privileges granted to us by an all-wise and merciful Creator, that of prayer is unquestionably the greatest. Amid the flood-gates of light, opened to us in the scheme of our redemption, the commandment to pray is indisputably the brightest—for it is the passport the soul receives from above, without which it could have no chance of returning thither. Of the efficacy of prayer, none can doubt who have ever, through its medium, "cast their burden upon Him" who alone can lighten it; of its necessity all must be convinced, from the ejaculations of the most hardened and unbelieving: for no sooner do the waters of affliction close over their souls, than their first impulse is to call upon and appeal to their God. Like the drowning Peter, they cry "Help, Lord, or I perish!" and till the divine assistance is held out to them, the storm rages, and destruction seems inevitable, but, like the frail disciple, they no sooner ask than they obtain. The very act of prayer, in itself, calms and mitigates the bitterest trials: for we feel that we are returning them to him who sent

them, and if they are not suited to us, they will be removed, and if they are, he will enable us to bear them. What is so likely to restore the soul to that lost divinity, which the greatest of pagan philosophers so beautifully supposed it once to have possessed, as prayer, which is, in other words, an intercourse with God? Even if we had not the truths of revelation to commend it to us, we should still have the most pure and truth-like structure of philosophy to lure us to it; for, in the words of Schlegel, Plato imagined, that, “from an original and infinitely more lofty and intellectual state of existence, there remains to man a dark remembrance of divinity and perfection; and, further, that this inborn and implanted recollection of the Godlike remains ever dark and mysterious: for man is surrounded by the sensible world, which, being in itself changeable and imperfect, encircles him with images of imperfection, changeableness, and error, and thus cast perpetual obscurity over that light which is within him.” And what is there so likely to lead the immortal link of our natures back to the severed chain of its divinity, as a constant communion with its eternal source? Gratitude should make the happy pray—alas! how seldom does it do so! But prayer is the only safety-valve of sorrow; the heart would break without it. If, then, prosperity and this world’s good so chills and hardens the heart in its heavenward course, happy are they whose afflictions strike on their souls, like the rod of Moses on the rock, to make the living waters of their salvation gush forth! Julia rose up, a happier, and, she hoped, a better person; but, alas for human virtue! between its firmest resolves and the most trifling circumstances that surround it, it resembles the traveller in the fable of the “Sun and the Wind:” what force could never do, the merest trifle often achieves. Lady De Clifford had just made a solemn determination that she would not even think of Mowbray; she had taken her candle for the purpose of retiring to rest, and sleeping upon so good a resolution, when she heard her husband’s voice, calling to her at the end of the gallery.

“Oh,” said he, as soon as she had opened the door, “I wish you’d just write a line to Mowbray, and say we can take him to Venice to-morrow if he likes; there will be plenty of room, as my mother has her own carriage, and Fanny is going with Mrs. Seymour; and you may as well write a note to that poor devil De Rivoli, and say Herbert can take him.”

Write to Monsieur De Rivoli—that was easy enough; but write to Mowbray!—Julia trembled like an aspen leaf. What would he think? What could he think but the truth, that she had obeyed her husband’s orders? “How silly I am!” said she: “it is my own consciousness that makes it so formidable. Of course, he will scarcely look at the note, and won’t know who it is written by—

at least, I mean he'll forget it the next moment." This Julia felt was not true, and she blushed at her childish folly in trying to deceive herself. Three times she dipped the pen into the ink before she could make a beginning; and the third time she dropped the ink upon her hand. Macbeth could scarcely have felt more frightened at the drops of blood. At length she began — "Lord De Clifford has begged of me to say"—but that did not do; she felt there ought to be a commonplace beginning; so she thus recommenced:—

"DEAR MR. MOWBRAY.—Lord De Clifford has begged me to say that he can take you to Venice to-morrow, for Madame De A.'s ball on Thursday; we leave this at one o'clock.

"Dear Mr. Mowbray, truly yours,

"Palazzo, Monday night."

"JULIA DE CLIFFORD."

When she had concluded this difficult epistle the words looked like icicles to her; then again the "dear," and the "yours," looked too much, which occasioned another ten minutes' deliberation. The next precaution was to hunt for a plain seal — that done, the bell was at length rung, and the note dispatched; but not till Beryl had been re-called to wait while one was written to poor Monsieur de Rivoli, who would have found it difficult to believe that any woman in existence could have been guilty of the bad taste of so totally forgetting him. When Julia's note reached the Albergo Reale, Mowbray had been in bed some time; but there is an extraordinary intuition about servants, which always makes them better acquainted with their master's and mistress's affairs than they are even themselves. Consequently, when Lady De Clifford's note was put into the hands of Mowbray's valet—without any fear of his master's just indignation for disturbing his slumbers, he instantly repaired with it to his bedside — not, however, before he had bestowed a hearty malediction upon those tiresome envelopes, "which prevent one finding out a single word in a letter till the seal is broken," and a "wonder that the gentlefolks should use them, now they *was got* so common."

"What's the matter, Sanford?" said Mowbray, starting up, awakened by the opening of the door.

"Beg your pardon—nothing, sir, only a note from Lady de Clifford — (for on such occasions, servants invariably announce the author of the credentials they present, however they contrive to find it out so accurately as they do) — only a note from Lady De Clifford; and I did not know whether it required an answer."

"Quite right," said Mowbray, snatching it off the salver, as if he thought it had been contaminated by lying there so long. "Bring me the pen and ink, and a blotting-book, and wait in the next room till I call."

As soon as he was alone, he tore open the seal, but for full five

minutes the words swam before his eyes so, he could not distinguish one from another. What a mysterious feeling is that which we experience upon beholding, for the first time, the writing of the person we love addressed to ourselves! However common-place the subject and the words may be, yet to us they have a meaning and a mystery, the same words never had before, and never will have again : they are looked upon again and again, in every possible direction ; we try to discover if our own names are written more clearly or more tremblingly than the rest, and in either case our hearts are satisfied with the omen. Even the paper is scrutinized to its very edges, as though we had never seen a sheet of paper before, or as if that sheet of paper must of necessity be different and superior to any that had been previously made, like characters traced in milk, which are weak and invisible, till exposed to the heat of the fire : each time we gaze on this mysterious paper, the warmth of our own imagination brings out a force and a meaning that was imperceptible before ; then every word is kissed as passionately as if it were the lips that could have uttered them. So long a time had elapsed, while Mowbray was thus employed, that Sanford reappeared unbidden, having had recourse to that expedient of all his order—"did you ring, sir?" At length Mowbray despatched the following answer :

"Will you, my dear Lady De Clifford, return De Clifford my best thanks for his kind offer of conveying me to Venice, of which (if I shall not crowd you) I shall be too happy to avail myself.

"Ever believe me, my dear Lady De Clifford, most faithfully yours,

"AUGUSTUS MOWBRAY."

A few days before, anticipating at least a temporary separation from Julia, Mowbray had had a seal engraved, with the following motto

L'absence est la mort, mais la mémoire c'est l'immortalité!

With this seal he now sealed his note, and then passed the rest of the night in reading, and re-reading Lady De Clifford's little perfumed billet. What sweet links are perfumes, and music, in the chain of memory! How vividly do particular airs and odours recall to us particular persons, especially the latter! Who is there that has ever loved, who has not felt the truth of Ben Jonson's beautiful conceit of—

"I sent thee late a roseate wreath,
Not so much honouring thee,
As giving it a hope that there
It could not withered bee.
But thou thereon didst only breathe,
And sent'st it back to mee:
Since when it growes, and smells, I sweare,
Not of itselfe, but thee!"

Beryl brought Lady de Clifford's chocolate at least an hour earlier on the following morning, and with it Mowbray's and Monsieur de Rivoli's answer; half an hour after which, she knocked at the door of the bath-room, with a message from Lord De Clifford, to know what answer Mowbray and Monsieur de Rivoli had sent.

"Oh, they both come," said Julia. "Dear me, what have I done with Mr. Mowbray's note? I have mislaid it!" It was lucky for her that Beryl was employed in placing a pair of slippers on a "prie-dieu," and throwing a "peignoir," on the back of it, or she must have perceived the crimson denial Lady De Clifford's cheeks gave to her words;—"but here is the other," continued she, handing over Monsieur de Rivoli's parallelogramish epistle, with its huge Cham of Tartary looking seal—the contents of which were in the following characteristic words:

"MA CHÈRE LADY DE CLIFFORD,—Heureux de vous plaire, je suis toujours à vos ordres.

"Votre tout dévoué,

"CHARLES DE RIVOLI."

Little Julia had begged of her mother to let her (as she expressed it) go and wish the poor cathedral good-by before they left Milan. Accordingly, as soon as she was dressed, they set out for it, leaving word, when the carriages were ready, to pick them up there. They had been for the last time to the top of the belfry, and were descending, when they met Mowbray and Monsieur de Rivoli, who having been to the palazzo, had been told that Lady De Clifford had gone to the cathedral; and dreading that if they went in, they should be condemned to one of Herbert Grimstone's quintessence of self-conversations, (for, as Pope said of Gay, he "always laboured under a painful intenseness about his own affairs,") or else break in upon some of the Dowager Lady De Clifford's complicated travelling preliminaries, they decided upon not "walking in and sitting down," as they had been requested to do, but going "ex cathedra," to meet Lady De Clifford.

"I am so sorry," said she, "that you should have had the trouble of coming here."

"Nothing can be a trouble," said Mowbray, "which obtains for one the happiness of seeing you."

"E vero, vero!" said a voice with a sigh; the same voice and the same sigh that had so mysteriously responded to a remark of Mowbray's two months before, when he stood at the tomb of St. Carlos of Borromeo.

"How extraordinary," said he, "that that voice should always answer me, and in the very same words too, whenever I come here! and still more that those words should be always 'à-propos!'"

"Ha! ha!" laughed Monsieur de Rivoli; "it is de Italian echo of de old Lady De Clifford's *varee just observation*, 'voilà tout, mon cher!'"

"Oh!" what a darling little bird," cried little Julia, pointing to one that sat in a nook of the stairs, "and what bright eyes it has!"

"E vero, vero!" repeated the bird, as it flew upon the child's shoulder.

"I am delighted that the mystery is solved," said Mowbray, "for I was growing quite superstitious and unhappy; but," added he, securing the bird, "you are now a prisoner from this day—not that I would rob you of your liberty, without giving you a still greater blessing. Lady De Clifford, will you take care of this poor little starling?"

Julia took the bird, and placed it in her bosom till she could get a cage for it.

"Ah, quel doux esclavage! cela vaut bien la liberté!" said Monsieur De Rivoli."

"E vero, vero," again echoed the bird.

"Ah! I have to thank you for your amiable *poulet* of dis morning, Lady De Clifford."

Julia laughed, and seeing that Mowbray looked at Monsieur de Rivoli rather indignantly for the term he had made use of, she said,

"I wonder what the origin of the word *poulet* was, as applied to a note?"

"C'étaient autrefois en Italie," said Monsieur de Rivoli, "les vendeurs de poulets, qui portaient les billets-doux aux femmes; ils glissaient le billet sous l'aile du plus gros, et la dame avertie ne manquait pas de le prendre; mais ce manège ayant été découvert, le premier messenger d'amour qui fut pris fut puni par l'estrapade, avec des poulets vivants attachés aux pieds. Depuis ce temps, poulet est synonyme à billet-doux." (1)

"So that, in fact," said Mowbray, "there has always been *fowl* play towards the Marito's."

"Ah, quel calembourg atroce! c'est vraiment digne de Saville," said Monsieur de Rivoli, as he set off with little Julia, who had found her way into the street in full chase after a butterfly. Mowbray and Lady De Clifford followed slowly after; neither of them speaking, till the latter, seeing the carriages approaching, and her husband and brother-in-law in the first one, consciousness made her speak. So, turning to Mowbray, she said, "Which part of Italy do you like the best?"

He raised his eyes from the ground, and, looking full in Julia's, said in a low voice, "Madame de Sevigné says in one of her letters to her daughter, 'Tout ici brille encore des souvenirs de vous!'"

(1) The above derivation is to be found in M. Le Mercier's very agreeable work, abounding in philosophical acumen and just views, entitled, "Tableau de Paris," published at Amsterdam, 1783. The author adds, like a true Frenchman, "Les commis ambulants de la petite poste en portent et rapportent sans cesse; mais une cire fragile et respectée tient sous le voile ces secrets amoureux; le mari prudent n'ouvre jamais les billets adressés à sa femme."

And then added in a louder and more disembarrassed voice, just as Lord De Clifford's dormeuse drove up, and Herbert Grimstone jumped out, "*I like Milan the best.*" Close in the rear, followed the Dowager Lady De Clifford's travelling vehicle, which greatly resembled a small, black, square packing-case upon wheels; on the top of which was strapped a round black leather muff-box; and on the top of that, a large parrot's cage; thereby presenting a most pelion-upon-ossa-like appearance; in the small coal-scuttle-looking rumble sat Mrs. Frump, in a brown beaver bonnet and green veil; a neat Manchester cotton gown, and shawl to match, with a further shelter of a rough, brown, mangy-looking bear-skin boa: at her side roosted Mr. Croaker, her ladyship's butler; whom, like Madame Duval with Monsieur du Bois in "*Evelina*," she "*never went nowhere without.*" Inside sat her ladyship, in a bottle-green cloth habit, studded with flat green cloth ipecacuana lozenge looking buttons; but the reverse of the Alps, who have summer at their base, and winter at their summit, her ladyship terminated in a light lavender-coloured silk bonnet, and a green veil.

"Well, my dears," said she, stretching her head out of the window, and addressing her two sons, "how do you mean to go?" As she spoke, Mamselle D'Antoville (who sat beside her, in vain trying to quiet a little corpulent, asthmatic, one-eyed pug, whom "*slumber soothed not, pleasure could not please!*") cast a look at Lord De Clifford, as much as to say "*For goodness sake get me out of this?*" Whereupon Herbert fraternally stepped forward and said, bowing, and gallantly taking his mother's hand—

"My dear Mamma, if you will kindly give me a seat in your carriage, I should prefer going with you."

"My dear I should be very glad; but a—Momselle, and you—see my carriage is so small."

"Oh, mi ladi, I would not for de world prevent Mr. Grimstone to come in; I am greatly oblige for your kindness to take me so far."

"A close carriage makes Mademoiselle ill, I know," said Lord de Clifford, stepping forward, and assisting his Dulcinea to descend.

"In that case," said her ladyship in her blindest tone, "I should be *vaustly* sorry that *Momselle* should remain, however I may regret the loss of her company."

As soon as Mademoiselle had safely alighted, Herbert prepared to take her place; whereupon his amiable parent, with all the tender anxiety of a mother, fearing (as he was only three and thirty), that he would not be able to get in with no other assistance than that of his own servant, who stood at the door, cried out "*Croaker! Croaker! be so good as to help Mr. Herbert.—Frump! Frump! how can you be so vaustly stupid, why don't you get down, don't you see Mr. Herbert a going to get into the carriage.*" While her ladyship was making these maternal arrangements,

Lord De Clifford had handed Mademoiselle D'Antoville into his phaeton, and seated himself beside her ; consequently, it only remained for his wife to take possession of the britschka, with her child, Mowbray and M. De Rivoli, which she accordingly did. The parrot, getting impatient of delay, now began to exert its lungs, and cry

“Make haste ! make haste ! you are so *vaustly* stupid.”

“What a devilish clever bird that is of yours, my dear mamma,” said Herbert Grimstone, almost deafened with its scream.

“Very just observation,” responded the parrot.

“I declare it's downright witty,” said Herbert with a forced laugh. But the parrot did not like to be laughed at, so it began to scream louder than before.

“Croaker ! Croaker !” in her turn screamed the dowager ; “bring down the cage, and put it into Lady De Clifford's carriage. The fact is,” said she, turning towards Julia, “I brought it, Lady De Clifford, thinking it might be an agreeable addition to the little *gurl*,—pretty dear !—Polly's very pretty, is'nt she ?”

“I hate it,” said the child ; “pray do n't send it here :” but her words were lost in the sound of her grandmother's chariot wheels, while Monsieur de Rivoli's voice was heard above them, and even above the cracking of all the postilions' whips, exclaiming, “*Mais diable ! vous avez de drôles d'idées de l'agréable, vous !*”

CHAPTER XII.

A young author was reading a tragedy to Monsieur Piron, who soon discovered that he was a great plagiarist. The poet perceiving Piron very often pulled off his hat at the end of a line, asked him the reason. “I cannot pass a very old acquaintance,” replied the critic, “without that civility.”

“Friends and comrades of mine,”

He exclaim'd, “as a sign,

While I slept, has come o'er me a dream all divine.

It has warn'd me how far from the vessels we lie,

And that some one should go for fresh force to apply.”

DR. MAGINN'S *Homeric Ballads*.—No. 4.—THE CLOAK.

THE next evening found the whole party assembled in the little “cabaret” at Fusina, grumblingly awaiting the arrival of the gondolas to convey them to Venice, and the gentlemen unanimously consigning their respective couriers to the tender mercies of the nether powers, for not being there with the boats before them.

The ladies, as is generally the case, were more resigned to their fate. Mowbray had stuffed his travelling-cap into a broken window, to guard Julia from cold ; while Saville, with equal solicitude, had converted his cloak into tapestry for a broken door, to prevent an invasion of the winds, lest Fanny should share the fate of

Orithyas, and he run away with by Boreas. Mademoiselle d'Antoville sat in the window-seat, recruiting her spirits with "le moindre soupçon d'eau-de-vie." Beside her sat Lord De Clifford, like Jupiter in Olympus, surrounded by clouds—of smoke, which he was puffing from a meerschäum, emblazoned with the loves of Charlotte and Werter. Little Julia had formed a "partie quarrée" with Prince, Zoe, and Tiney. Monsieur de Rivoli was trying to obtain a satisfactory glance of as much of his own face as was recognizable in a three-inch triangular piece of looking-glass, which gleamed from a brown paper frame, that formed a modest "bas-relief" to the white-washed wall. Herbert Grimstone was stretched upon some carpet bags at his mother's feet (deep in the study of his own work upon Timbuctoo); that amiable lady having taken the precaution to convert Mrs. Frump's Manchester shawl into a chair-cushion, thereby effectually guarding herself from the dangerous results of any sedentary damp or cold which she might otherwise have been exposed to. Her next precaution was to tuck up her habit, and so reveal a neat, white, dimity petticoat, and a very judicious pair of cotton stockings and black leather shoes, which, with the feet they contained, were deposited in Frump's lap, who had received orders to take up her "lodging on the cold ground," and exemplify the ups and downs of life by a gentle friction of her ladyship's ankles.

At a respectful, but convenient, distance, stood very perpendicularly, with his back against the wall, that enduring individual Croaker; his mistress's clogs and the parrot's cage in one hand, while with the other he pressed to his manly breast Snap, her ladyship's canine favourite, around whose neck, with a benevolence which, as she herself would have said, "did credit to her head and hert," she had tied a scarlet worsted comfortable, that formed an enlivening contrast to the drab density of the animal's natural complexion; notwithstanding which, it was blinking and shivering in all the neutralities of a demi-slumber, its nose pushed into the protecting bosom of Croaker, who generally acted as dry-nurse when Frump was otherwise engaged.

Mrs. Seymour, having no "*particulier*," had seated herself on a table just above Herbert Grimstone, and was now in her turn beginning to complain of the bore of being kept waiting so long.

"I wish I had something to do!" said she, "for it is by no means pleasant to be kept here all night, conjugating the verb."

"Would you like to read?" said Herbert Grimstone, kindly offering her his own interesting work on Timbuctoo.

"Thank you," said she, declining the proffered volume, "for reminding me that absence of evil is good."

Herbert bit his lip, and accidentally on purpose let the, in every sense of the word, *heavy* book fall upon Mrs. Seymour's pretty

little foot, that was swinging like the pendulum of a clock, backwards and forwards.

"Well, that is one way of making your book go down, at all events," said Fanny, as she ran to rub Mrs. Seymour's foot.

"To say nothing of making one feel what he writes," laughed Mrs. Seymour, in the midst of her pain.

"Ah, I now see de reason le pauvre petit has look so sorry de whole route," whispered Monsieur de Rivoli to Mrs. Seymour.

"Pourquoi?" said she.

"Why, do you not recollect, une fois quand Voltaire a pris l'air triste, and his friends not know for what, Madame du Châtelet say to dem, 'Vous ne devineriez pas pourquoi Monsieur de Voltaire est si triste, mais je le sais. Depuis trois semaines, on ne s'entretient dans Paris que de l'exécution de ce fameux voleur, mort avec tant de fermeté; cela ennuie Monsieur de Voltaire, à qui l'on ne parle plus de sa tragédie; il est jaloux du roué!' (1) and we have talk of nothing but de 'bal costumé,' and never once mention le petit Herbert's malheureux Timbuctoo!"

Herbert hearing his own name, accompanied with a suppressed laugh, bent forward and inquired in his most piano voice if Monsieur de Rivoli had been speaking of him? To do the French justice, they never like to hurt people's feelings, and therefore what we term insincerity is in their character nothing more than a practical illustration of their own very clever caricatures, entitled "ce qu'on dit et ce qu'on pense;" so he, without the least hesitation, replied,

"I was only saying, my dear fellow, dat you were like Voltaire."

"How so?" asked Herbert, with a mixed expression of pleasure and resentment; for his vanity led him to believe that nothing but his extraordinary talents could induce any one to class him with Voltaire, whilst his ears put a much truer but less flattering construction upon the laugh he had heard.

"Parce que," replied Monsieur de Rivoli, pointing to the dowager, (whose head was luckily turned the other way, as she was in the act of rummaging in a large black bag for one of Mr. Tymmons's bills of costs, which she had selected as an agreeable companion in a post-chaise,) "parce que vous êtes devant l'âge qui vous fit naître!"

"Devilish good, indeed!" said Herbert, who in his eagerness to

(1) Before the first French revolution, the word "roué" was applied to all notorious characters, such as thieves, pickpockets, vagabonds, and murderers, and not confined to the sense in which it is now used, as applied to a libertine; though the word was used in that sense also, with the true French addition and distinction of the word "aimable;" "un roué aimable" meaning a libertine par excellence, in contradistinction to a simple vagabond.

grasp at the shadow of a compliment, totally lost the substance of the irony; "but you *are* so witty, my dear fellow."

"Les prêtres ne sont point ce qu'un vain peuple pense;
Notre crédulité fait toute leur science,"

muttered Monsieur de Rivoli, as he turned away to hide the smile he could not suppress, and which was communicated like electric fluid to the mouths of every one present, except those of Herbert, his mother, and brother. Next to his own matchless work on "Timbuctoo," Herbert Grimstone's favourite topic was modern French literature. There were two reasons for this partiality: first, the obscene trash and inconceivable horrors that are hourly night-mared in French garrets, and assume a "local habitation and a name" from the Parisian press, unaffectedly charmed him, not only from the matter they contained being perfectly suited to his calibre of morality, but because the intellect they evinced acted as a sort of soothing syrup to the painful and feverish dentition of his vanity: in reading them, he felt that he too was a genius—that he too could write! Therefore, instead of flinging down the book with the pettish and "nil admirari" exclamation of "this fellow," or "this woman is deucedly overrated," which invariably followed his turning over the leaves of any of the standard writers of his own country, he always felt inclined, after the perusal of the pink and yellow covered gnome-inspired trash, so lauded by "la jeune France," to become, in his own person, an additional "ignis fatuus" on the charnel altars of modern French literature; but his chief reason arose from the pleasure and superiority he felt in talking before ladies of what they could possibly know nothing about; for, thank Heaven, except through the warning pages of the "Quarterly Review," the very titles of these books are unknown to our countrywomen—a circumstance which, doubtless, gave rise to a rather severe philippic against their ignorance, in Herbert Grimstone's valuable work on "Timbuctoo," where discussing the state of the universe at large, past, present, and future, he naturally and patriotically makes a sort of semi-colon stop at England; and there takes occasion to lament, that the uneducated ignorance of English ladies (!) prevented their having any conversational powers.

Nationally speaking, none can pretend to assert that they have either the wit of a de Sévigné, or the philosophy of a de Staël, to give that depth to their thoughts, and that brilliancy to their words, which raises conversation to a science—the science, "par excellence," in which our Gallic neighbours so pre-eminently excel. Neither are English women, it must be confessed, so "au fait," or rather, so "au courant," to every pas the march of intellect daily makes, whether on countries or on individuals; but other reasons may be assigned for this, more cor-

rect than either ignorance or incapacity. It is one of the most incontrovertible axioms in political economy, that the greater the demand for an article is, the greater the means of its supply become.

We have only to extend this principle to human intellect, (with regard to which it holds equally good,) and the enigma of English women's deficiencies in conversational powers, is solved at once. On the tree of knowledge, as cultivated in England, women are taught to look upon politics, science, statistics, and mathematics, as so many grafts of forbidden fruit; and hence the eternal, not very gallant, query of the other sex, of "What can women know about such things?" for Englishmen seem to think, that the nearest approach to perfection in a wife is to be found alone in those women who are the best possible imitations of automaton; and that ignorance is not only the most complete guard to virtue, but that it is also the best safety-valve for vice. In England, there is an inverse ratio of false pretences; for no young gentleman, fresh from college, who, after having gained the greasy suffrages of the great unwashed of some metropolitan borough, through his dulcifluous anathemas against all existing laws, ever laboured more indefatigably to appear Cicero, Lycurgus, and Aristides, all in one, than does an Englishwoman of common sense to appear as ignorant, and consequently as inoffensive, as the most fastidious censor of female attributes could wish.

Englishmen politely banish rational conversation in female society, as being beyond the comprehension of their pro-tempore companions; and as, twenty years ago, the generality of grown persons invariably spoke to children as if they thought them fools, and so often *made* them that which they had supposed, the same effect from the same cause (despite the march of intellect) may sometimes be produced upon adults now. I have often remarked, too, that if a woman ventures to evince any "esprit de corps," and, in defence of the depreciated intellect of her sex, triumphantly brings to her defence the names of an Edgeworth, a De Staël, a More, a Carter, a D'Acier, a Montague, a Bailey, a Martineau, a Gore, etc., etc., some supercilious pedant of the other sex instantly tries to silence her by a contemptuous smile, and an "All very clever, certainly! but women want that profundity which must ever prevent their attaining any eminence in science!" In time past, Novella, of Bologna, and several others, are again urged, and, for the present, the name of Somerville is declared, with just and heart-felt pride, not only as having equalled, but distanced the lords of the creation in their own course; and, oh! triumph of triumphs! while astonishing and benefiting the world, by discoveries in science which even the more clear and subtile powers of masculine intellect had hitherto failed to make, this gifted and

extraordinary lady (if report speaks truly) contrives to fulfil, unerringly and unceasingly, every duty and every amenity that comes within the narrower but not less important precincts of a woman's sphere, quite as well and as meekly as though she had been the most ignorant and illiterate of her sex. But at the mention of this illustrious name, the sceptical coxcomb, being changed into the defeated bully, dexterously changes the conversation: the reason is obvious—as Berenice was the only woman in Greece allowed to witness the Olympic games, so Mrs. Somerville is the only woman in Europe who has dared (and who in daring has succeeded) to penetrate into the mysterious arena of science, hitherto monopolised by the other sex, and, consequently, like her Athenian prototype, they are determined to punish her by alluding to the singular intrusion as little as possible; but I, for one, sincerely hope that their impotent spite will not deter her from pursuing her glorious privilege.

It may be urged, that Mrs. Somerville is “the exception that proves the rule:” in reply to which I would ask, how many male ignoramus go to a Bacon, a Newton, and a Locke? though, being men, they have had equal advantages of education with the illustrious trio just named. In France, on the contrary, “*les femmes se mêlent de tout* ;” and I firmly believe that the Salique law only exists because Frenchmen prefer being governed by a republic of women, instead of delegating sovereign power to *one*. From Molière's old woman up to a Roland or a De Staël, they are made umpires in literature, politics, and the fine arts; and if France has produced more heroic women than England, it is not because they have naturally nobler natures than English women, but because patriotism is not with them, as with us, exclusively inculcated as a masculine virtue, or set apart as one of man's many unshared privileges.

Women in France are allowed to feel as great an interest, because they have as great a stake, in their native country, as the sons of the soil. Nothing can more completely exemplify the genius of the two nations, as regards the estimation in which women are held, as the zoological distinction of “females,” under which the greatest ladies in the land are classed with us: while, in France, the very fishwomen are “*les dames de la halle*.” A French scavenger is as polite and as much “*au petit soin*” to an apple-woman as a French duke would be to a duchesse; for the apple-woman is still a “dame” for him: whereas, see the same apple-woman in England, and the odds are, the first man she meets will purposely jostle against her, and when he has succeeded in rolling her and her fruit into the kennel, will indulge in a horse-laugh at her misfortunes.

The lower class of English women wait upon their lords and

masters, and perform for them offices of manual labour which would convince a South-Sea savage how remiss his squaw was in the wifely virtues of industry and endurance. It is true, that the upper class of wives are, of necessity, exempt from *this* species of humiliation; but it is also true, that their degradation and subjection only assumes a different form and manner: inferiority is still the unmistakeable badge of the order. With us, the luxurious expenditure of a man is "*de rigueur*," while the mere necessities of a woman are furnished by accidental and fortunate superfluities. The extravagance of fathers and sons is always to be atoned for by the economy, privations, and self-denials of mothers and daughters.

English women have but one privilege—they may devote their lives to the education, welfare, and care of their children, without ever being able to obtain one single conventional or legal right over them, while the father, be his vices what they may, or his neglect ever so unnatural, still possesses, by our wise and moral laws, the whole and sole control over the unfortunate little beings who may be destined to feel all the disadvantages of his power, without reaping any of the benefits of his protection.

They manage these things, if not better, at least more gallantly in France: even the "*ménage au quatrième*," conducted on three hundred a-year, still finds madame enveloped in a cashmere, while a point lace veil adorns her bonnet, "*lest the winds of heaven should visit her face too roughly*." Not only at Long-Champ, but for the ordinary "*démarches*" to St.-Cloud, Fontainebleau, etc., a remise is always at her command, while her considerate spouse is content, as far as his own costume goes, to make "*boue de Paris*" the prevailing colour. That marital arrangements should ever reach this perfectionized state in England, is a Utopian vision far beyond the dreams of hope; even a "*juste milieu*," it is to be feared, with us can never exist, for in a country where there is such a superfluity of clubs, there must of necessity be a deficit of cashmeres!

But to return: Herbert Grimstone had had the satisfaction of descanting upon a series of works, unknown to every lady present; for which reason Monsieur de Rivoli (the person whom he had especially addressed himself to), with the good-breeding of his country, had made several ineffectual efforts to turn the conversation, and had even been sufficiently "*rococo*" to assert boldly that he did not think Victor Hugo so great a genius as Racine, or that there was any danger of George Sand's unpeDESTALING the Cottins, Sevignés, Daciers, and Despinasses of the olden time. So, finding the pulse of the audience favourable to Monsieur de Rivoli's side, he kindly resolved to meet them on their own narrow ground, poor things! and talk to them of such minor

stars as Chateaubriand and Madame de Staël! Therefore, politely addressing his sister-in-law across the room, he said, with a pitiful smile,

“I think, my dear Julia, you like nothing but religious books, which I assure you the French are by no means incapable of writing: for instance, what can be more high-wrought, indeed almost canting, than “Corinne,” “Mathilde,” and “Atala?”

Fanny and Mrs. Seymour laughed outright at Mr. Herbert Grimstone's ideas of religious books, and Julia very nearly did the same as she replied, “I cannot agree with you in thinking any of those religious books, and the religious aphorisms and exclamations—for I know not what else to call them—which are scattered through them, are rather offensive than otherwise: what I mean is, the sentiments of religion are brought into such profane contact with some of the worst actions of human passion, that in reading them, one experiences the same revolting sensation, that one might be supposed to feel, if one saw ‘Romeo and Juliet’ acted at one end of a cathedral whilst the bishop was preaching on the Atonement at the other. Indeed, the only time Madame de Staël's genius ceases to be omnipresent, and, as far as the heart goes, omniscient, is when she leaves the Parthenon for the simple but mysterious altars of Christianity; and then I always think with that most charming woman, ‘Mrs. Blackwood,’ that

“’T is a pity when charming women

Talk of things which they don't understand.”

With Chateaubriand it is otherwise; his is a more soul-taught theology—still I cannot say I like those mosaics of love and religion, like the ‘Atala,’ where love is the ‘pietro dura,’ and religion the cement which first serves to unite, and eventually to separate them.”

Julia was proceeding when a frown from her husband, expressive of astonishment at her daring so boldly to assert her opinions, and disapprobation at her presuming to differ from his brother, effectually stopped her.

“Oh! I understand,” said Herbert, with a smile more of contempt and less of compassion than his former one: “you like the whole thing to be about religion; some people do. Now, here is a pamphlet, which has made a great noise in France,” said he, drawing the abbé de Lamennais’ “Paroles d’un Croyant” out of his pocket, “and is, I should think, just the sort of thing you would like.”

“I have read it, and do not like it at all,” said Julia, coldly.

“What is it, my dear?” inquired the Dowager Lady De Clifford.

“Why, my dear mamma,” said Herbert, knitting his brows thoughtfully, and assuming a solemn tone of voice, “it is a very admirable work on religion, by a very distinguished French Abbé.

It is called 'The Words of a Believer.' I've had it in my pocket ever since the day I bought it."

"I'm sure, my dear, it does great credit to your head and *hort* to carry such good books about you; and every one must admire you for it *vaustly*."

"My dear mamma," said this dutiful son, kissing his exemplary parent's hand, in the performance of which filial evolution, he considerably endangered Frump's frictionary equilibrium, and nearly reduced her to a horizontal position; "my dear mamma, if *you* do, *that* is quite sufficient for *me*."

"Really," said Mrs. Seymour to Monsieur de Rivoli, "that little animal is quite disgusting, and I have a great mind to tell him so."

"Bah! bah! laissez-lui donc son costume de famille; ça lui sied, c'est sous cette livrée qu'il doit parler, sans rien dire, déraisonner agréablement sur tout, et étaler les grâces de sa profonde ignorance!"

"I believe you are right," said Mrs. Seymour. "But what on earth is that?" continued she, looking towards the window, to which the whole party now crowded, to behold a sight somewhat out of the common.

Half a dozen gondolas were rapidly approaching to the landing-place, the foremost of which had some unusual decorations, consisting of a rocking-horse, strapped outside on the top of it; an umbrella, in proud rotundity, was spread before the entrance; a red carpet bag obtruded from one window, while over the other hung a ham and two dried tongues, divided by a tin tea-kettle, and a pair of beefsteak-tongs. This culinary-looking flotilla at length anchored; and from it issued two figures, the first, in size and colour, not unlike a hippopotamus, having on a dark, shapeless, Indian-rubber coat, a black boa coiled several times round its throat, an Indian-rubber travelling-cap, shaped like a melon with a slice cut out of it, and ears comfortably tied under the chin. The blue goggles that gleamed from the upper part of the wearer's face made no bad representation of the antediluvian animal's eyes.

Under the arm of "the stout gentleman," for such it turned out to be, was a small portfolio, and in his hand was a blue cardboard hat-box, ornamented with pink bordering.

No sooner had he landed, than, lo! another mass of human flesh emerged from the gondola; but, though of equal magnitude, its exterior was very different. A blanket-coat, with dark horn buttons, the size of half-crowns, enveloped "the last man," which, when "turned aside" by the passing gale, displayed a pair of Russia ducks, evidently of the most republican principles, as they scorned the legitimate restraint of straps, and consequently had departed far from the allegiance due to a pair of Wellington boots, which must have been made out of some singularly unfortunate

dogs, as it was easy to see that they had never had their *Day* (and Martin!) A red Belcher graced the throat of this individual; and a black broadish-brimmed hat crowned this portly personage. His ample cheeks flowed as it were over the red Belcher, in perfect incognito, under favour of the same colours: in his right hand he held a papier mâché snuff-box, with a fox-hunt on it; and in his left the last Galignani.

“Why, by all that’s ubiquitous, there’s Nonplus!” cried Saville. He had scarcely uttered this assertion, when the latch was raised, and the major entered, towing the other “stout gentleman” after him.

“Your most obedient, ladies and gentlemen,” said the former, removing the aforesaid sleepless Golgotha from his head. “Thought I’d wing you to a minute? Those couriers of yours wanted to be here two hours ago, and I would not let them—no use paying the gondolas all that while—old soldier—no humbugging me!”

“For which reason,” said Saville, “you thought fit to hum us: for we have been here these last two hours, collecting appetites that I’m very sure no albergo in Venice can satisfy.”

“Ah, Saville, my boy, how do?” said the major, for the first time espying him, and extending two of his stumpy, freckled, sausage-looking fingers; “but I want,” continued he, totally disregarding the veracity of Saville’s reproaches—“I want to accommodate all my friends, if I can. Now, there’s this good gentleman, Monsieur Barbouiller—Monsieur Barbouiller, my Lord and my Lady De Clifford; ‘*le feu*’ Lady De Clifford (pointing to the dowager); ‘*sa petit fils*’ (aiming another finger at Herbert); Madame Seymour, ‘*tout le monde*,’” concluded the major, making a sort of circular bob of the head. “*Tout le monde*, Monsieur Barbouiller, *hommes d’affaires—de lettres*, I mean—no offence, Monsieur, for the ‘*homme d’affaires*’ has letters of credit, you know, so I’m not sure that he has n’t the best of it; for the *l. s. d.* are worth all the other letters in the alphabet, to my mind. Well, what was I going to say? All these introductions have put it out of my head. Oh—ah—this good gentleman here, Monsieur Barbouiller, is in a great hurry to get to Padua; so, having fished out from your couriers that Seymour was going there, I seized him, just as he was sitting down to his solitary cutlet, after a twenty-four hours’ fast (for he has been travelling night and day), feeling assured Seymour would give him a place in his carriage, to save time, and also be good enough to convey a few English delicacies to my friend Tompkins, and a few toys to the children, as he writes me word that Padua produces nothing but learned men, skeletons, and surgical instruments, none of which can be conveniently turned into food, you know. But where is Seymour all this while?”

“At Padua,” replied Mrs. Seymour, with a gravity that put an end to every one else’s—“where he has been since ten o’clock this morning.”

The major gave one long shrill whistle, and then deposited his tongue in the corner of his right cheek, where it remained silent for two minutes. The ill-fated Monsieur Barbouiller shrugged his shoulders, raised his eyebrows considerably above the rampart of his purple goggles, and uttered in a gentle tone, between a sigh and a tear, “*Mon pauvre poulet à la Tartare ! pourquoi vous ai-je quitté ?*”

Poor Monsieur Barbouiller, maugre his lilac goggles, had, like all Frenchmen, that innate tact which prevented him ever being “*de trop*” when people had paired off ; so, casting a disconsolate glance round the room, he perceived that the Dowager Lady De Clifford was alone, unprovided with an escort ; and with the look of a martyr, and the step of a hero, gallantly made three strides forward, and led on the forlorn hope of his politeness, by throwing himself into the breach between her and Croaker, and offering her his arm.

Now, it so happened, that her ladyship (as a gentleman of my acquaintance once wittily observed of a similarly gifted individual) had an amazing talent for resisting languages ; consequently, French, Italian, and German, in their relative positions to her conversational powers, stood on the same side as Hebrew, Greek, and algebra ; therefore, having taken possession of the proffered limb, and in her usual business-like manner, given a receipt for the same, in the dulcet sounds of “*mercy, monseer !*” she escaped from further colloquy with the unfortunate reviewer, by discharging a volley of “*pretty dears !*” at her pug and parrot. But Herbert Grimstone, who always sniffed out a reviewer with bloodhound keenness, joined him on the other side ; and placing his left hand gracefully in his bosom (a favourite attitude of his), and brandishing Timbuctoo in his right, he entered graciously, or rather obsequiously, into conversation with the doomed critic ; and, notwithstanding Lord Chesterfield’s admonition, “*Never to talk to a man of his calling,*” he started from the post, plunging at once into literature in general, and periodical literature in particular—then lauding Monsieur Barbouiller’s review, not only as the best in France, but in Europe ; though, at the moment, he was unaware even of the name of the review he so much admired ; and least of all was he aware that it was the infernal machine, and Monsieur Barbouiller the remorseless Fieschi, who had so completely bé-chamelled his invaluable work upon Timbuctoo, especially that part of it abounding in mis-statements about France.

However, upon making the discovery at a subsequent period, he consoled himself with this pithy reflection, “*Barbouiller will*

think me a devilish high-minded magnanimous fellow, and it must conciliate him for the future!" Alas! for the unsophisticated innocence of Mr. Herbert Grimstone, who was not lapidary enough to know, that however good dinners may and *do* have the effect, soft words never yet smoothed down the stony ruggedness of reviewers' hearts.

Thus luxuriating in this delightful conversation, or rather oration, (for the poor Frenchman had not uttered a syllable,) the trio proceeded to the place of embarkation; Monsieur Barbouiller, for the first time roused into speech by one of those anti-ambrosial odours so rife along the shores of the Adriatic, exclaimed, just as Herbert Grimstone was quoting his own pet passage upon statistics from Timbuctoo, "Oh, c'est épouvantable!" Monsieur de Rivoli, who was close behind, and had witnessed the whole scene, burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter, and pushing Monsieur Barbouiller's shoulder, cried, "A-propos, mon cher!" while Herbert, as usual on the wrong scent where the joke was against himself, chimed in with "'Pon my soul, it's dreadful!" while his amiable parent presented the distressed critic with some eau de Cologne, which she persisted in calling *Hungry water*.

"Non, a tousand tank, madame," said that unfortunate gentleman, "but I quite hungry enough; I should tink all de water here was hungry, for dere is no fish in dis maudit mer, I can get none all de time I at Venice." Here his deserted poulet à la Tartare flitting across his imagination, Monsieur Barbouiller closed his eyes and relapsed into silence with a sigh. Having reached the gondolas, a debate arose as to how they were to be freighted; upon which, Major Nonplus, with his usual active zeal for making people comfortable, suggested that as Mumsell De Dontoville, as he called her, was French, she would find it much pleasanter to go with Monsieur Barbouiller than any one else; but Lord De Clifford, flinging at him a look all dignity and daggers, handed her into the nearest boat and seated himself beside her; whereupon the major, as was his wont upon discovering one of his own blunders, pushed up his eyebrows, pursed up his mouth in order to execute a whistle, and giving Monsieur de Rivoli a dig with his forefinger in that gentleman's left ribs, said in a stage whisper, "Whew! I suppose he thinks her virtue would not be safe with such a fascinating fellow as my friend Blue Goggles—ah! ah! ha!"

"Non—dat cannot be," said Monsieur de Rivoli, as he handed Mrs. Seymour into the last gondola, the rest of the party having rowed off "car quar amissa salva."

"Bravo! bravo! go it my hearty," said the major, with a commendatory slap on the back; "really, for a Frenchman, you are a monstrous clever fellow!"

No sooner was the little flotilla under weigh, than Herbert

Grimstone returned to the charge, having misquoted some of the songs of Tasso, to "suit the word to the action." He re-opened Timbuctoo at a parallel between Dante and Petrarch, taking Monsieur Barbouiller's closed eyes and folded arms for unequivocal symptoms of profound attention, which were in reality but the effects caused by the disagreeable motion of the gondola, in juxta-position with twenty-four hours' abstinence. "However," continued Herbert, reading as follows, "'The gratification of knowing, and asserting the truth, and of being able to make it resound even from their graves, is so keen as to out-balance all the vexations to which the life of men of genius is generally doomed, not so much by the coldness and envy of mankind, as by the burning passions of their own hearts. This sentiment was a more abundant source of comfort to Dante than to Petrarch,(1) of which we have proof in the following lines :

"Mentre ch' i' era a Virgilio congiunto,
 Su per lo monte, che l'anime cura,
 E discendendo nel mondo defunto,
 Dette mi fur di mia vita futura
 Parole gravi; avegnach'io mi senta
 Ben te tragono ai colpi di ventura.
 Ben Veggio, padre mio, sì come sprona
 So tempo verso me, per colpo darmi
 Tal, ch' è più grave a chi più s'abbandona;
 Perchè di Provvidenza è buon ch'io m'armi.
 O Sacrosante Vergini! se fami,
 Freddi, o Virgilie, mai ver voi sofferesi,
 Cagion mi sprona ch' io mercè ne chiami,
 Oh convien ch' Elicona per me versi,
 Ed Urania m'aguti col suo coro
 Forti cose a pensar mettere in versi.
 E s'io al hero son timido amico
 Tempo di perder vita tra coloro
 Che questo tempo chiameranno Antico."

Here Herbert paused for applause, and here Monsieur Barbouiller doffed his blue goggles, opened one eye very widely, and darted a glance like an optical Columbus into Herbert's "lack-lustre" orbs; but discovering nothing there, he calmly observed with a slight inclination of the head, "Dose ver fine line of Dante, and dat most just critique of Ugo Foscolo dat go before dem."

"D—d the fellow! what a memory he has," thought Mr. Herbert Grimstone, as he closed his invaluable work on Timbuctoo, and followed Monsieur Barbouiller's example of shutting his eyes and folding his arms, just adding by way of anodyne this protocol to his thoughts—"I wonder what the fellow's politics are, for I should like to show him my pamphlet on the present administration."

"Heavens! what will not those falsehood-mongers, the poets,

(1) A parallel between Dante and Petrarch, by Ugo Foscolo.

have to answer for," said Saville, looking out upon the sea, as they turned into the canal on which the St. Leone Bianco was situated, "for all the lies they have told about streams

" 'Rushing in bright tumults to the Adrian sea ;'
for a dirtier—dingier—more ill-conditioned-looking set of waters I never beheld !"

"Ma foi oui," cried Monsieur de Rivoli ; "and what a dirty bride de poor Doge of Venice dey must have had !"

"And half the time raging and storming like a Xantippe," laughed Fanny.

"Yes, but then her Marito could wash his hands of her, whenever he pleased," rejoined Saville.

"Toujours à nos calembourgs," pish'd Monsieur De Rivoli, as the gondola stopped at the steps of the Silver Lion, where stood mine host bowing most obsequiously, but looking like anything but a sea-god—in a pair of bran new nankeens, a light brown coat of equal juvenility, a sky-blue waistcoat, and a snow-white shirt, in the centre of which blazed a cornelian brooch, the size and colour of a pomegranate blossom. Had he had as many eyes, ears, and tongues, as Briarius had hands, he could scarcely have looked at, listened to, and answered all the people who now assailed him with interrogations touching their own individual comfort and accommodation.

Lord De Clifford was anxious to know, with that paternal solicitude which formed such a distinguishing trait in his character, whether he could have a dressing-room near, or rather next, to his daughter's schoolroom?—His amiable and exemplary parent was equally anxious to ascertain whether she could have one at some distance from her bedroom?—"For," said she, always bent upon showing how attentive she was to the well-being of others—waving her hands as she spoke, with that grace peculiar to herself and the paddles of a wherry—"for mong fom de chomber endorm dang mong chomber et—My dear," turning to her affectionate son Herbert, "you who speak French and Italian so *vaustly* well, do be so good as to tell the man that Frump sleeps in my room, and I'm afraid the screaming of the parrot might disturb her."

The dutiful son obeyed, and then proceeded to inquire, if he could have a quiet apartment to write in, with the luxury of a lock and key to the door? as he did not like leaving papers of importance about. And here he disencumbered his servant of a despatch-box he had hitherto taken charge of.

Monsieur De Rivoli, taking advantage of the pause which this occasioned, leant forward, and gave in a schedule of his wants, which amounted to the laudable desire of inhabiting a room which did not look upon the sea—"the air of which," as he justly observed, "not only made one seem, but in reality become, 'jaunâtre.'" At the same time, he stipulated not to have one of those dark nar-

row dens which generally compose the rear of most Venetian houses ; “for,” as he with equal truth remarked, “that in such places, it was impossible to make a toilette fit to be seen.—‘Figaro ici, Figaro là.’”

Round went the unfortunate owner of the Silver Lion’s Head, as though it had been upon a pivot, and “Si Signor,”—“Madama bene,” gushed from his lips, like water from a torrent. Next chimed in a chorus of ladies’-maids, entreating the courier to ask Mr. What-d’ye-call-’em, “if he was sure there were plenty of wardrobes and drawers, as their ladies’ things had been so put about, to be sure, and *hevery hindividual* thing treated so *permiscus* as to be nearly spoilt.”

At length, all these important preliminaries arranged, poor Monsieur Barbouiller ventured to inquire, in a voice almost inarticulate from hunger and emotion, “If, ‘par hazard,’ his ‘poulet à la Tartare’ happened to be still in existence?” The “No,” which gave the death-blow to his hopes, seemed to promise immortality to his appetite; for, at that moment, he felt as if all the chickens that ever had, or ever would exist, would not be sufficient to assuage the compound addition of his hunger. Herbert Grimstone, pitying in some sort his distress, and thinking that after-dinner would be an admirable time to sound his political opinions, and show him his pamphlet “On the present Administration,” politely invited him to join his brother’s dinner-party, adding the consolatory assurance, “that the dinner having been ordered since the morning, it was then ready.” In gratefully availing himself of so unexpected a blessing, poor Monsieur Barbouiller removed his Indian-rubber cap from his head, and pressed his hand upon his heart, and, after bowing almost to the ground several times, looked at Herbert Grimstone with a smile of benignant complacency, as if then, for the first time since their acquaintance, he appeared not only to feel, but to admire the beauty, grace, and appositeness of the expressions that had just fallen from that highly-gifted young gentleman’s mouth.

Lord De Clifford included Major Nonplus in the invitation, by politely saying. “D—n it, Nonplus, you may dine with us too!” But that distinguished officer and polished gentleman declined, upon the plea of having an engagement to meet a person on business, half an hour from thence, at the “Café della fiore,” on the piazza.

At the time of which I am writing, there was at the Silver Lion, at Venice, an English waiter, or at least a waiter who spoke English (vide the difference between a horse-chestnut and a chestnut-horse), and, like the old woman who lived under the hill,

“If she’s not gone, she’s living there still!”

To him Major Nonplus now turned, and in a sonorous and dignified voice, addressed to him the following queries :

"I say, waiter!"

"Yes, sir."

"What have you got in the house?"

"Almost every thing, sir, that you please to have."

"Let me see—have you any woodcocks?"

"Not in season now, sir."

"Oh! ah!—true, I forgot!—A larded capon?"

"Yes, sir."

"Any mullet?"

"Yes, sir, red and gray."

"What soups?"

"Julienne—sauté à la Reine—à la Jardinière—purée à la bisque aux huîtres."

"No possibility of getting a joint, I suppose?"

"If you wait, sir, you might have a loin of mutton."

"Ah! well—what wines?"

"Here's the carte, sir."

"Humph! 'Champagne, Château Margot, Nuits, St. Péray, Aï blanc, Hermitage rouge et blanc, Sauterne, vin de Paille, Hock, Lachrymæ Christi, Orvietto, vin d'Oporto, Marsalla, Xeres.' Well, a"—

Here the major turned round, and finding that the rest of the party had gone up stairs, and he was left "alone in his loveliness," said to the waiter, who was quietly transferring a napkin from one hand to another, while he stood attentively awaiting the major's directions for the extensive dinner he appeared inclined to order, with a pencil ready to mark down the numerous items, for fear he should forget them—"Well,—a—you may bring me—a—mutton-chop, and—a—decanter of water.—And—a—I say, waiter!"

"Yes, sir."

"Let the water be iced."

"Yes, sir."

"And—waiter!"

"Yes, sir."

"Oh! nothing—only be sure to have the water iced, for I seldom drink water; but—a—when I do, I'm particular about it,—that's all."

A mutton-chop and cold water are not things to tax a man's time beyond the small currency of minutes; consequently, Major Non-plus soon discussed his, and with equal brevity dispatched his business at St. Marc's; for the dessert was scarcely on the table before he joined Lord De Clifford's party, and after drinking a couple of bottles of claret, (just merely to ascertain how it tasted after iced water,) proposed that the whole party should go to the theatre, where one of Alberto Nota's plays, "I primi Passi al mal

Costume," was that evening to be acted. This motion being carried, they adjourned to the theatre accordingly. In this play the Genoese advocate has drawn an animated picture of the manners of the higher classes in Italy, exemplified in a young bride, only married a few months, who, nevertheless, at that early stage of her wedded life, gives way to the follies of dissipation, coquetry, extravagance, and "serventism." — Her heart, however, being still uncorrupted, and her husband a man of a calm disposition, rather bordering on passiveness, seems to place entire confidence in her. Her father, an old officer, hasty, blunt, and credulous, hearing some slanderous reports about his daughter's conduct, proceeds to her house, and there upbraids her husband, whom he taxes with weakness; then begins to rave against his daughter, who, by the help of one of those artful assailants so useful on such occasions, wards off his charges, and persuades him at last that her faults have been exaggerated, as is really the case, but that she is perfectly irreproachable and guiltless, even of imprudence. The old gentleman, satisfied with this, becomes her warm defender. The lady's intrigue, however, with a young lieutenant, which was at first a mere matter of commonplace gallantry, now assumes a more serious and dangerous aspect: presents and billets doux are received, and all this under that most fatal and deceitful veil of platonic love, which in all such matters is "*le commencement de la fin*;" the character of the lieutenant is that of most male platonists, namely, an artful, heartless, despicable *roué*.

The husband, by means of an unmarried sister, an envious, hypocritical woman, whom the bride has taken no pains to conciliate, obtains evident proofs of his wife's imprudence, if not actual guilt. Knowing the character of the cavaliero, the *sposo* devises a means of opening his wife's eyes, by showing her all the baseness of her pretended lover; thinking this will be the surest way, with a spirited mind like hers, to cure her of her folly.

Camilla (the bride) had planned to go to a masked ball, and there meet her *inamorato*. She had prepared a splendid dress for the occasion. Her husband at first forbids her to go, and this in the presence of her lover, under pretence that she is not sufficiently well; then, after some reflection, seeing her extremely mortified at the idea of being kept a prisoner at home, he tells her, when they are left to themselves, that she may go, if she consents not to put on her new dress (by which she would be known), and to accompany him under a common mask. They proceed to the ball, and there Camilla, to her great vexation, sees her lover, whom she had fondly imagined was (as in duty bound) at home sorrowing over his disappointment; instead of which, he is devoting himself to another, and assiduously pouring into her ear

all those vows and protestations which Camilla believed to have been exclusively her own ! Nay, more—she hears him vehemently disclaim all affection for her, and add in a tone of insulting pity, that he cannot help her affection for him ; and even presents his present companion with Camilla's picture (which he had that morning, unknown to her, abstracted from her toilet), telling her it had been her last gift that very day, but now offering it as an ovation at the shrine of his new divinity. The veil is rent from Camilla's eyes—the spell is broken !

The next day, she confesses her weakness before her husband, her father (husbands and fathers take these things more quietly on the stage), and her lover ; which last she upbraids for his baseness. Her husband, seeing her sincere repentance, (most obligingly) forgives her—the lieutenant sets off for the army, and the married couple begin a new career of domestic happiness. Now, though this play certainly was not exactly a parallel to Lady De Clifford's position, yet was there quite sufficient resemblance between the circumstances, though not the conduct, of Camilla and herself, to make her feel exceedingly uncomfortable throughout the whole performance. Indeed, of late, every book she had opened, every conversation she had heard, seemed as if especially to warn or to taunt her,—to turn upon the subject of female impropriety ; and in the latter, she could not help thinking that every one had suddenly grown much more fastidiously moral than they had wont to be. One scene, however, in this play had plunged her into a train of painful reflections, which were by no means either new nor unusual with her. In the scene where the lieutenant shows Camilla's picture to her rival, swearing at the same time that he never loved her, Julia could not but recall many similar scenes in real life, to which she had been an eye and ear witness. How often, either prior or subsequent to some disgraceful and disgusting trial, whose issue, whether pro or con, was to send some lovely but frail (or it might be only imprudent) woman an outcast upon the world for ever,—the theme of every gossip,—the jibe of every lacquey,—had she seen the heartless cause of all in a brilliant assemblage, 'mid the blush of beauty and the blaze of fashion, the gayest of the gay !—hanging wooingly over *another*, or barbing the smile and pointing the jest at his last poor victim, who at that moment had no companion but her hot tears and her broken heart, and who, instead of the rosy wreaths and sparkling gems with which she lately attracted all beholders, had now her poor temples wreathed with leeches to avoid madness ! And is it for such cold-blooded, heartless, soulless wretches as these, she has asked herself, that a woman risks,—*loses all* ?

There are, it is true, some men who are longer than others in coming to this termination ; but come to it they do at last, and

although their words may be less coarse, their conduct is not more delicate. There are epicures in love as well as in gastronomy, and in either case they like to prolong and refine their pleasure as much as possible; for which reason, the epicurean profligate will, for some time, endeavour to honour and exalt his victim as much as possible, till convenience, interest, or circumstance make him desire a change; or, what is more sure than any, till custom, that mildew of a man's heart, blights every feeling, and then there is but one result:

“For man, seldom just to man, is never so to woman.”

And why should he? since no wickedness, no meanness, no treachery, no falsehood he can be guilty of towards them, can unfit him for a place in the legislature, or in society; and since no violation of the laws of God can deprive him of the all-securing protection and immunities of the laws of man. Lord Byron says somewhere in his journal, “When justice is done to me, it will be when this hand that writes is as cold as the hearts that have stung me.” Would to Heaven that every woman had this sentence engraved on her heart by prescience, instead of by experience! and then fewer would put themselves in the way of more injustice, than every daughter of Eve brings into the world with her, as the mortgage the serpent has left upon her sex!

Julia looked melancholy and dispirited, as she always did when reflections like the above came across her. Mowbray perceived it, and surmising the cause, contented himself with abusing the play—the tameness of the plot—the heartless coquetry of Camilla—the dishonourable conduct of the lover—the gullibility of the father, and the humble endurance and christian forgiveness of the husband—all by turns shared his animadversions, as they walked to their gondolas. The night was soft, and balmy in the extreme, and the moon shone as brightly as any that had ever lit that Adrian sea; ever and anon, fairy sounds floated on the air, of soft mandolins and softer voices, which, in their turn, were echoed by the ripple of the oars in the silver waters of those genius-haunted waves.

“I never see the sea by moonlight,” said Julia to Mowbray, as they sat together at the head of the gondola, “without wishing I was Undine, that I might plunge in, and see all the bright treasures beneath.”

“What an exquisite tale that is!” replied he.

“Yes; and if she was supernatural, Huldbrand was, at least, a *true* man, because a *false* one,” replied Julia, with a smile that was *not* seen, and a sigh that *was* heard, and felt, too, at least by Mowbray.

“I fear,” said he, “that his character is indeed but too true to nature; but the beauty of the story consists in the beauty of the

allegory; for, surely," he continued, in his lowest and most musical voice, as the gondola stopped at the steps of the Silver Lion—"surely, you must admit, that we never have a soul—at least, that we never feel that we have one, till we love."

"I admit," said Julia, trembling violently as she lent on his arm to ascend the steps—"I admit, that we are never in danger of losing it till we love."

CHAPTER XIII.

MILTON.

"True enough; your plotters bring many great changes into many whole families, and sometimes into several and distant countries, within the day; and, what is more difficult and incredible, send off all parties well satisfied, except one scapegoat."—*Walter Savage Landor's Imaginary Conversation between Andrew Marvel and Milton.*

"I have often been puzzled to assign a cause, why women should have the talent of ready utterance, in so much greater perfection than men. I have sometimes fancied that they have not a retentive power, or the faculty of suppressing their thoughts, as men have, but that they are necessitated to speak everything they think; and if so, it would perhaps furnish a very strong argument to the Cartesians for the supporting of their doctrine, that the soul always thinks.

Nor must I omit the reason which Hudibras has given, why those who can talk on trifles speak with the greatest fluency; namely, that the tongue is like a race-horse which runs the faster the less weight it carries. Which of these reasons soever may be looked upon as the most probable, I think the Irishman's thought was very natural, who, after some hours' conversation with a female orator, told her that he believed her tongue was very glad when she was asleep—for that it had not a moment's rest all the while she was awake."—ADDISON.

WE will for a short time leave Lord De Clifford and his party at Venice, preparing for Madame de A.'s masquerade, while we take a quiet stroll down the pleasant village of Blichingly, and see how fare matters there. For my own part, there is to me an indescribable charm in the calm, the quiet, the soft, the cultivated, and, above all, the home look of English scenery, which neither the gorgeous and Belshazzar-like splendour of the East, the balmy and Sybarite softness of the South, the wildness of the West, nor the frozen but mighty magnificence of the North, can obliterate or compensate for. England (the country, not the people) is merry England still. There is a youth about England that no other country possesses, not even the *new* world, for there the vast and hoary forests, the rushing and stupendous torrents—all seems like Nature's legends of immemorial time. It has been beautifully said, that "the world of a child's imagination is the creation of a far holier spell than hath been ever wrought by the pride of learning or the inspiration of poetic fancy. Innocence that thinketh no evil; ignorance that apprehendeth none; hope that hath expe-

rienced no blight; love that suspecteth no guile;—these are its ministering angels,—these wield a wand of power, making this earth a paradise. Time, hard, rigid teacher—reality, rough stern reality—world, cold heartless world; that ever your sad experience, your sombre truths, your chilling cold, your withering sneers, should scare those gentle spirits from their holy temple,—and wherewith do you replace them? With caution, that repelleth confidence; with doubt, that repelleth love; with reason, that dispelleth illusion; with fear, that poisoneth enjoyment; in a word, with knowledge, that fatal fruit, the tasting whereof, at the first onset, cost us paradise. And the same almost may be said figuratively of English scenery; it has none of the might and majesty of maturity, none of the worn and rugged look of experience, none of the deep and passionate hues of adolescence; all its beauties are the cared for, watched over, cultivated, open, smiling, innocent, continually progressing, and budding beauties of childhood; the very mutability of its climate is a sort of childish alternation of smiles and tears; the repose of its smooth and verdant lawns is like the soft and velvet cheek of a sleeping child; the sweet and fairy-like perfume of its green lanes and hawthorn hedges is as the pure and balmy breath of childhood. “England, with all thy faults,” and in all thy seasons, “I love thee still.”

“When Spring from her green lap throws
The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.”

I like to hunt for those yellow cowslips, and those pale primroses, till I fancy earth has its stars as well as heaven; but the year soon outgrows its infancy, and the innocent wild violets no longer child-like roll along the green; for when

“The bee goes round to tell the flowers ’tis May,
then come those stately nymphs, the blooming lilacs and the graceful acacias — “waving their yellow hair;” but they, like all beauties, alas! have but their day; and are succeeded by rich, blushing, pouting summer, making, with its roses and its cherries, every boy and girl sick for love of it. After which one feels more sober and sedate, and the golden harvests, and matronly housewifery of autumn, is more attractive; but these too, with all earthly things, must pass away—the year, like man’s life, “falls into the sear and yellow leaf,” and for hoary winter’s artificial fires, we must turn to the hearts and hearths of our own homes.

In calling Blichingly a village, I have done it wrong; though not quite a town, it was something more than a village: the French call those mule-like domiciles, between a house and a bandbox, *maisonnettes*, and I do n’t see why Blichingly should not be called a *townette*; for it had one street of unexceptionable red brick houses, with stone copings, brass knockers, and green balconies; in which street (High-street of course) flourished two rival hostel-

ries; "The Good Woman" (most ungallantly represented by a headless female) and the "De Clifford Arms;" the two greyhounds in the supporters of which, punning apart, looked most doggedly at the aforesaid virtuous and inoffensive individual. Blichingly, moreover, boasted an excellent market-place; a library and a reading-room, known also by the appellation of "The Club;" duplicate grocers; ditto bakers; ditto butchers; ditto haberdashers; ditto saddlers; ditto tailors; ditto chandlers; ditto brewers; ditto printing-offices; ditto horseponds; in short, ditto everything but pumps and pounds; of which there were four of the former, and only one of the latter. These duplicates, immaterial as they may seem, were of the uttermost importance: for at election times, when Triverton (the county town) was overflowing, party spirit might have run the risk of being smothered, did it not find vent by being extended to Blichingly; when, above all, the four pumps and the two horseponds were found extremely useful on the liberal side, being as great dampers to Toryism as the two hostelries were incentives to pure patriotism or Whiggism. It was about four o'clock on a wet October day, the rain had suddenly ceased, and the sun was bursting forth in all its splendour, when Peter Nangle, the Blichingly postman, walked into the bar of the De Clifford Arms, and delivered a letter into the hands of mine host, honest John Stokes. "Humph," said he, turning the letter in every direction without looking at the seal, which was neither more nor less than a fac-simile of his own sign, bearing Lord De Clifford's arms;—"humph!—two and eightpence: why this here letter is from *forrin* parts. O so it is surely," continued he, looking for the first time at the seal, and then added, calling to his wife, who was in an inner room, "Nancy, I say, Nancy, mark down two and eightpence postage to the old lady, will ee?"

"And who may the old lady be? A near relation to the old gentleman, I 'spose," said a dark, cross-eyed, ill-favoured man, who sat by the fire smoking, and drinking hot brandy and water, while an old man, with a pale face and long white hair, was sitting silently and gloomily smoking on the other side.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed John Stokes as he desisted from his researches in a Rockingham tea-pot for a crooked sixpence, that he was anxious to transfer to the postman, "my eye, if she wor but to hear you, your feet might know the feel of the stocks again, Master Brindal, before you was much older."

"Whew!" whistled the individual so addressed, who was no other than Richard Brindal, better known as Bring-em-down Dick. "Whew!—then the relationship is clearly proved enough."

"That is it," said the hitherto silent old man, with a deep sigh, as he dashed his pipe violently from him into a thousand pieces, and walked hastily out of the house.

“How old Lee do take on,” resumed the ruffian, “about Mary’s misfortune; why, there’s plenty of lads to marry her yet. I should not mind doing it myself, if she war n’t growed so pale and so mopey looking, and if my Lord would come down with anything decent to support the child; but it’s not pleasant working for other men’s brats even though they are great men’s.”

“Hush,” said John Stokes, who had by this time spelt over Lord De Clifford’s letter—“hush, do n’t go for to say nothing of the sort, for here’s a letter from my Lord his self, who says as it aint hisen, and you may read it.”

“Well, if he says *that*,” said Brindal, “nobody can deny that he’s his mother’s own son; for that’s a whopper that would choke a whale; but tip us the license,” continued he, stooping to re-light his pipe at the bars of the fire, and stretching out his left hand behind his back for the letter, which ran as follows:

“Milan, September 28th, 18—.

“STOKES,—Have the goodness, upon the receipt of this, to find out who poor Mary Lee is to be married to. My mother (with that generosity for which she is so distinguished) having given or ordered Mr. Tymmons to give her a hundred pounds for her dower, out of compassion for the poor girl’s insanity, which I understand has taken the turn of imagining me to be the father of her child. *I assure you, on the honour of a gentleman*, I know nothing whatever of the girl personally. I am sorry that old Lee and his sons should believe the ravings of the poor maniac, as I must always feel grateful to them for their hitherto zealous exertions on my behalf at all the Triverton elections, for which reason no subsequent conduct of theirs can ever make me either privately or politically lose sight of their interests as my fellow countrymen. It has been hinted to me through private channels that Richard Brindal is the father of Mary Lee’s child. I should be sorry to condemn him upon mere report; but could this be ascertained, I should feel it my duty, for the sake of morality, to make *him* marry her. Is he in the country at present? But my chief object in writing this is to tell you, whenever Mary Lee’s marriage takes place, to provide the wedding dinner, etc. etc. etc., and put it to my account. Farmer Jenkins had better be invited, with the rest of the Rushworth people, to show that neither my mother nor myself bear them any ill-will. I hope Mrs. Stokes is well, and is getting her best blue ribbons ready, (which by-the-bye, become her better than any others,) for they talk of a dissolution in spring.

“Your well-wisher,

“DE CLIFFORD.”

When Brindal had finished reading this mingled tissue of *truth* and generosity, he fairly took the pipe out of his mouth, and laying it upon the hob, while he leisurely refolded the letter, at length burst into the following eloquent assertion:—“Well, if that ar n’t coming it pretty strong, I’m blowed if I know what is! but I wonder what chap is a going to marry Mary Lee; for I’ve never *heer’d* on it. I should n’t mind doing it myself, as I said afore, for that ere hundred pounds—I be so hard up just now.”

“What! and father the child and all?” asked Stokes, looking slily from under his eyes.

“Why, I do n’t know *ezactly* what to say to that,” said Brindal,

scratching the back of his head, and thereby pushing his hat over his eyes, "'cause as how you see, Master Stokes,

" 'He as prigs what is n't hisen,
When he's cotched will go to prison,'

"Ha! ha! ha! And not being pertickler, I'd rather *not* go, as the old lady said when the devil comed for her."

"La, Mr. Brindal," said Mrs. Stokes, who now emerged from the inner room, with a tray full of pickles that she had been tying up, "I should n't a thought as you'd a minded going to prison; for as the cat's back said to the flea-bites, it's nothing when one's used to it!"

Now, though Mrs. Stokes was fat, fair, and forty, and moreover absolute in her own house, yet the very name of Bringem-down-Dick, like that of Rugantino erst of old in Venice, carried with it a vague terror that none cared to brave; but whether it was that the very look of brandy inspires courage, and that Brindal was in the act of mixing a fourth tumbler of that exhilarating beverage as she entered, and that her eye fell upon it, or upon the long list of unpaid chalk scores to Mr. Brindal's account that graced the right hand side of the chimney-piece, or from "some stranger cause still unexplored,"—but certain it is that Mrs. Stokes had never before ventured so much *of*, much less *to*, Mr. Richard Brindal; and it is equally certain that she had no sooner said it, than his dark sinister look made her bitterly repent her temerity. Already her imagination darted into futurity, and she felt herself minus several heads of poultry—her hams were unaccountably rusty—her gooseberry wine flat and tart—the ale at the De Clifford Arms forsaken (O horror of horrors!) for that of the Good Woman, and her best China bowls broken by some anonymous malefactor, against whom vengeance was impotent. All this, and a great deal more, she felt would in some unaccountable manner be the inevitable result of her offending Richard Brindal; a presentiment which she was confirmed in, when he calmly and coolly replied, "Why, for that matter, Mrs. Stokes, do you see there be some things that one dislikes, jist because one is used to them. Now a woman's tongue, too pertly hung, is one of them; and for my part," continued he, pointing to the opposite sign, "I wish all sich was sarved like the young ooman in the picter there."

Poor Mrs. Stokes, bent upon repairing her first unlucky speech by the most obsequious civility and unoffendable good-humour, began with a benignant smile, though her blood was running cold all the while.

"Why, Mr. Brindal, that is no wonder, for"——

"No, it is no wonder," interrupted Brindal, "'cause as how it's only a sign as a woman is never good for anything till her head has parted company with her body."

There is no knowing whether Mrs. Stokes's dignity, temper, and sex, could have stood this, or whether her husband might not have been obliged to come to the rescue, had not a red-headed maid-servant, in a crooked and very dirty straw bonnet, with a face and hands to match, just entered with a cracked tea-cup, and a request to Mrs. Stokes that she would lend Miss Mac Screw a spoonful of vinegar.

"Well, if it ain't too bad," said Mrs. Stokes, jerking the cup out of the girl's hand, "if it ain't too bad that a lady, if lady she can be called, however, that a woman with one hundred thousand pounds in the three per cent. consols, should be sending to borrow every hand's turn from a poor woman like me; it's to be hoped she'll remember me in her will for all the grains of pepper and salt, spoonfuls of mustard and tea, ends of candles, and parings of cheese, she has had from this house."

The spoonful of vinegar having been given, and the red-headed Iris departed, Mrs. Stokes inveighed amain against stinginess in general, and Miss Mac Screw's stinginess in particular, till John Stokes, who, from having formerly been a clerk in the Grand Junction Waterworks, never could see anything likely to overflow, without instantly turning the current, observed, "he was surprised Mr. Herbert Grimstone had never made up to Miss Mac Screw, as he understood he kept a reg'lar register like of all the great fortins in the whole world; and he had many a time heard his furrin valley say, when they was a staying up at the Park, that Mr. Herbert was none of your more nice nor wise gentlemen, for he'd marry the devil's grandmother (or, if he dared, his own mother, which was worse) for money!"

"Ah, he shows his mother-wit then," said Brindal, buttoning up his coat and shaking the ashes out of his pipe, as he prepared to leave the house. No sooner was he gone than Mrs. Stokes seated herself in the chair he had just vacated, and placing a hand upon each knee, said, as she looked wistfully at the before-mentioned white score, "I wish, John Stokes, you would make that ere good for nothink feller pay up what he owes."

"That's easier said than done, wife."

"Nonsense! why can't you bring him to the *pint* at once?"

"'Cause it's far easier to bring him to the quart, Nancy—ha! ha! ha!—than stop him at the pint."

"There you are again, always at your silly jokes; but I tell you what it is, Mr. Stokes, it's no joke to have such rum customers, and never see the sight of their money."

"My dear, he's not a rum customer, 'cause he never takes nothink but brandy."

"Flesh and blood can't stand it, John Stokes, so it can't," said Mrs. Stokes, darting out of her chair, and reaching down a black

cotton velvet bonnet from an opposite peg, which having placed upon her head, and adjusted at a small oval, blister-like, looking-glass that adorned the mantel-piece, she resumed, turning full upon her devoted lord, "And I tell you what it is too, Mr. Stokes, I won't stand it neither. Here am I slaving from daybreak to daybreak, pickling, preserving, mending, making, brewing, baking, serving the customers, making out the bills, larning the children, watching that no carriages change horses at the Good Woman, weeding the garden, and even baiting the rat-traps, while not a thing do you do from morning till night but laugh and joke, or drink with every one that comes in, or stand whistling at the door with your hands in your pockets, and go to bed at twelve, and never get up again till six the next morning; you great lazy, provoking, good-for-nothing, unaccountable, tyrannical, barbarous wretch, you."

"Tyrannical, my dear, O—"

"Hold your tongue, do; I never can get in a word edgeways for your eternal jabber; gabble, gabble, gabble, you go all day long like a goose in a pond, instead of listening to anything that could be of service to you."

Here Mrs. Stoke's attention and speech were at one and the same moment interrupted, by observing a piece of feline delinquency that by no means contributed to assuage the indignant feelings she was already labouring under. A large tom-cat, who, during the commencement of his mistress's oration, had sat quietly within the bar, very demurely purifying his paws, suddenly espied upon an upper shelf a half-knit worsted stocking, with a ball of worsted appended thereto;—this was a temptation not to be resisted, for Tom, like many other gentlemen bred to the bar, delighted in that species of mischief which consists in the antithetical process of entangling and undoing other people's work; so having in an accidental upward gaze been attracted by the ball, he gave one quick parting lick to his paws, another equally rapid circular one to his lips, and then vaulting nimbly upon his hind-legs, stretched forth his dexter fore-paw, till with one agile jerk he brought ball, stocking, needles, and all, to his own level. After the first nervous retrograde start at the *chevaux de frise* of pointed steel that seemed to aim directly at his eyes, he returned slowly and cautiously to the charge, till, emboldened by the now perfect passiveness of the needles, he began rapidly pushing the ball about with his paw in a most mace-like fashion, as though he had been playing billiards with his own shadow, till he at length succeeded in completely putting his foot in the stocking, and, not being able to extricate it at his pleasure, gave one loud melancholy mew—seldom heard from out his noble breast, save when serenading some feline fair one on a neighbouring wall. This unusual sound

it was that called Mrs. Stokes's attention to all the ruin grimalkin had wrought.

Now, gentle reader—for gentle at this moment I feel you are—for even though you should have just returned from St. Stephen's after ratting, still the perilous situation of poor puss must awaken all the gentleness in your nature;—well, then, gentle reader, lacerate not your too susceptible heart with unnecessary fears for the safety of one who *played not wisely, but too well*. Luckily for Tom's personal security, Mrs. Stokes, like Monsieur Jourdain, who had been talking prose all his life without being in the least aware of the fact, was (equally unknown to herself) a profound metaphysician, and therefore in the habit of attributing and referring the most palpable and visible effects to the most impalpable and hidden causes; consequently, in the present instance, she gently approached the cat, and in the most dulcet tones her voice was capable of, apostrophised him as follows:—"Poor Tommy—pretty fellow—I'll get his paw out for him;" which having done, she darted across the room to where her all-enduring spouse was standing, and dragging him by that part of his left arm nearest the shoulder, seated him by main force upon a high clerk-like stool within the bar before the chaotic mazes of the stocking, upon which he gazed mildly and meditatively, awaiting his doom, which his better-half soon pronounced.

"There, you great, (1) mischievous, idle, good-for-nothing feller; sit there till I come back, do; and roll up that worsted, and take up those stitches, and try and set to rights some of the mischief you have done."

"Me, my dear!" began Mr. Stokes, in a tone of well-founded astonishment, mingled with groundless contrition; "me, my dear!"

"Hold your tongue, do, John Stokes, you are enough to provoke a saint or a tea-totaller—so you are—with your eternal lies and excuses, let you do what you will; I could forgive all the harm you do, if you was not always a trying to defend yourself arterwards. None of the children do half the mischief you do."

"No, my dear, no one accuses them of it."

"What's that you say, Mr. Stokes?" inquired his wife, as she finished tying on her bonnet, which operation had prevented her hearing distinctly the remark her rash husband had hazarded.

(1) It may be satisfactory to the hypercritical reader (especially should he be a married man, and consequently too prone to impute blame to wives in general, and Mrs. Stokes in particular) to know that Mrs. Stokes, with true womanly devotion, and the hyperbole of wifely affection, overrated her husband in calling him great; he was, in reality, but four feet two by one foot nothing, while she was portly as Juno when she made the assignation with Ixion, but albeit (except her brow) most unlike her when she kept it. How much better and purer the social system would be, were there more wives like Mrs. Stokes and Juno, and more husbands like Mr. Stokes! but "*Diis aliter visum*," and as for Jupiter, the less said of him the better.

"I say, my dear, that they are very good children indeed."

"Yes, I believe they are—thanks to me, Mr. Stokes ; I should like to know what they 'd be if they took after you."

"Not much the better, certainly, for there is little good to be got from second-hand abuse and ill usage, which is all they could take after me, for that 's all I have from morning till night."

This reply was uttered *sotto voce*, although Mrs. Stokes had retired into the inner room, from which she soon emerged, armed with a bottle of wine, a sallylunn, and a packet of tea, all of which she destined for Mary Lee, who was ill, and unable to provide such things for herself. Mrs. Stokes, to do her justice, was overflowing with the milk of human kindness to every one of God's creatures except the enduring little animal who now sat upon that high stool within that low bar, taking up the stitches of that stocking which the cat had dropped ; but doubtless she thought, as he possessed the whole fountain from which that lactary stream emanated, there was no use in wasting upon him any of its outpourings.

Mrs. Stokes, having terminated her preparations by putting on her pattens, departed on her charitable visit to Mary Lee. Alas, poor human nature ! why is it that your best and purest feelings, like virgin gold, are sure to be mixed with considerable alloy before they can pass current through this world ? Mrs. Stokes had always been kind and attentive to Mary Lee, especially since what the common people emphatically call her *misfortune*. Tea, soup, and white bread she had liberally supplied her with ; but though she had long been weak and ill in the extreme, she had never yet got to wine ; but Lord de Clifford's letter, and the mysterious rumour of her marriage, all roused Mrs. Stoke's curiosity beyond concert pitch ; and though she could not have said *in vino veritas*, she felt that there was, and for the first time she suddenly recollected that a glass of wine would do Mary Lee all the good in the world. "It will warm her heart, poor thing, and open it too, perhaps ; for though her wits wander, her tongue is very still," thought Mrs. Stokes, as she set out on her mission, turning to give one parting look of admonition to her husband, who no sooner knew her out of sight, and believed her out of hearing, than he began singing Burns' "Address to the Deil," which he had picked up from a Scotch pedlar, raising his voice, as was his wont, when he got to the second verse.

"Hear me, auld Hangie, for a wee,
An' let poor damned bodies be ;
I'm sure sma' pleasure it can gie,
E'en to a deil,
To skelp an' scaud poor dogs like me,
And hear us squeel !"

CHAPTER XIV.

It is a tale better, perhaps, untold—

A dark page in the history of mankind,

Which would be better wholly blotted out :

It grieves me much to speak of evil things,

Thou knowest—yet thou urgest me to speak.

Well, then, draw near and listen.—M.S.

Was there ever seen such villany?

So neatly plotted, and so well performed?—JEW OF MALTA.

MARY LEE, about three years before the present period of our history, had been the belle of the village. She was deservedly the pride of her father and brothers. Mother she had none. There was not a young man within ten miles round that was not, directly or indirectly, an admirer of hers; and every matron in Blichingly cited her as a pattern of industry, goodness, and filial affection; and although she bore off the palm of beauty triumphantly from all her village rivals, yet such were her unvarying sweetness of temper and active zeal to oblige, that there was not one amongst them who (even under that severest test of female friendship, the loss of an admirer on her account) could find it in their hearts either to envy or dislike her—two feelings, by-the-bye, which are generally synonymous in the human heart. Did any girl, more addicted to the culling of kingcups and the chasing of butterflies, desert the dull monotonies of hemming and sewing for green lanes and greener meadows, and so leave some task unfinished till the eleventh hour, when some angry grandam's or schoolmistress's just displeasure was to be dreaded, it was ever avoided by Mary Lee's goodnatured and prompt completion of the neglected work. Many a long-puzzled-over sum had she also cast up with a quickness and fractional correctness that might have excited the envy, while it compelled the admiration, of Mr. Joseph Hume; she was moreover *écrivain public* to the whole hamlet; her garden boasted rarer and better-cultivated flowers than any other cottage in Blichingly. No wonder, then, that her bees produced more honey than any of her neighbours'; her poultry, too, had gained a well-merited reputation, which made it sought after by every housekeeper far and near; while her hens always laid sooner and later than any one else's; yet all of these was she ready to give, or to lend, as the occasion might require, to her less fortunate neighbours.

There is a sort of sanctifying halo in breathing an atmosphere of affection and good-will, that precludes all base and unworthy feelings; for the love of those by whom we are surrounded is a sort of moral sunshine, which expands and ripens the best germs in our nature; while to feel the blight of envy, hatred, contempt, malice,

hypocrisy, or ill-will, makes us end by being in reality what we were at first falsely accused of being. It is the conviction that every man's heart is against us that sets our heart against every man. Poor Mary was basking in the full meridian of this moral sunshine, when, at a dance given by the dowager Lady de Clifford, at Blichingly Park, to all her tenants, after a harvest home, Lord de Clifford first beheld her dancing under an avenue of fine large Spanish chestnut trees, as he sat listlessly smoking in one of the library windows, too cold and too proud to join the rustic group and thaw himself in the sunshine of happy faces. Equally surprised and riveted by Mary's bright and glowing face, and her fawnlike and unplebeian figure, he actually rose from his seat with an intention of joining the dancers, or rather, of becoming acquainted with her; but always dark, calculating, and designing, even under his strongest impulses, he checked himself, and turning to his amiable parent, as he pointed the amber mouthpiece of his pipe at her, inquired—

“My dear ma'am, who is that very pretty girl in the white dress, and straw bonnet with blue ribbons, that is dancing with one of Lord Sudbury's gamekeepers?”

Her ladyship advanced to the window, and after having levelled her glass at her for a few minutes, said—

“O that, my dear, is Mary Lee, the carpenter and undertaker's daughter—a *vaustly* clever young woman—the best plain-worker in Blichingly, and so clever about poultry and a dairy, and all that sort of thing. I wanted her to live with me as my maid, but her father would not let her; *these here* petty tradespeople are so much above themselves now-a-days, and Mary is thought such a paragon of perfection in the village. But, my dear, you who used to be so *vaustly* gallant, I wonder you don't go out and flirt with her; though,” added the virtuous and exemplary mother, with a sigh, “I suppose marriage has *spilt* you in this way, as well as every other.”

“Why, my dear ma'am,” replied her son, with a smile between a sneer and a muscular convulsion, “if she is such a paragon, I think I had better go to work more cautiously.”

“Very just observation, my dear; but you was always so *vaustly* clever. I never shall forget, when you was only four years old, the day you threw the glass of wine in your father's face after dinner, because, poor little dear, you was screaming for a whole pineapple, and he, in his usual tyrannical way, ordered you up to the nursery!”

Lord de Clifford paid little attention to this oft-repeated anecdote, so illustrative of his father's tyranny and his mother's judgment and affection; for the *vaustly* clever boy who had thrown the glass of wine in his father's face for reproving him, was the equally clever man who was now intent upon laying a plan how to ruin a

poor girl, of whose innocent and happy existence he had been ignorant an hour before. If Lord de Clifford did possess a talent in the world, it was one he inherited from his amiable mother—that of at once striking out upon the anvil of his imagination a dark and intricate plot, which would have cost any man, with a grain more feeling or more principle, half a life to organize. It would be a useless, as well as a disgusting task, to detail the minutiae of villany by which Lord de Clifford had effected poor Mary Lee's ruin. Suffice it to say, that by passing himself off for the son of a Norfolk farmer, and personating the character in the alternate fascinations of velveteen shooting-jackets, and blue coats and gilt buttons, he contrived to meet her everywhere — but in her father's house — for three months, and at the end of that time to get her to consent to a secret and, it is needless to add, a mock marriage. In vain poor Mary implored him to allow her to confide the secret to her father, even when, if she did not do so, her disgrace must become inevitable. Still he persisted that her doing so would ruin him with his father! And what misery, what ruin, what shame, will not the devotion of a woman's heart endure, to ward off a shadow of either from what she loves! And is man's return ever to be what it ever has been, insult, injury, and desertion? Ay, even so. When Mary Lee's child was born, in vain her poor heart-stricken father implored her only to let him know who was the author of her disgrace; in vain he promised pardon if she would: still was she inexorable, merely assuring him, with many bitter tears, that she was not disgraced, and that he should know all in good time.

Meanwhile Lord De Clifford, the soi-disant William Dale, grew less punctual at their trysting-place, a green dell about three miles from old Lee's cottage, called the Fairies' Bath, from a rivulet that terminated in a little oval pond of crystal water, at the bottom of which the smooth pebbles were to be seen, looking round and white as daisies. On the summit of a rock rich in flowering shrubs, at the northern end of this dell, was the ruin of an old abbey, whose vaults were supposed to be the repository of the contraband treasures of a gang of smugglers, who, through the medium of their coadjutors, the gipsies, had them conveyed from a small sea-port, not fifteen miles distant. It was from the ruined aisle of this old abbey that Lord de Clifford was wont to announce his arrival to Mary, by throwing a stone into the little pond, as she stood beside it in the dell beneath. Three months (during a pretended absence of his into Norfolk) had now elapsed since they had met there. It was a beautiful summer evening. The sun was flooding the glen, and pressing it to her purple west with farewell looks of golden light; the distant lowing of the cattle was the only sound to be heard save the dreamy humming of insects, for

“Life in its myriad form was on the wing.”

when Mary Lee, her child nestled in her bosom, and her heart beating high within it, once more repaired to the dell. She waited some time listening intensely for the well-known signal, till the very silence became audible from the painful acuteness of her own anxiety; but at length, instead of the accustomed stone, a heavy packet fell at her feet,—she opened it, and beheld ten sovereigns enclosed in a paper, on which were written these words:—

“MARY,—I cannot stay a moment, business of consequence prevents me; I send you ten pounds, for fear you should want money.

“Yours,

“WILLIAM DALE.”

Poor Mary's first impulse was rapidly to ascend the little winding path that led to the ruins, but she was startled back by hearing the loud quick echo of a horse's hoofs, galloping along the upper road; and each echo seemed to rush through and trample on her heart. Again she looked on the few cold words contained in the letter she still held,—“Business of consequence!” she repeated, “what business could, what business ought to prevent him for one moment only—for one moment from seeing me—from seeing his child—whom he has never yet seen?—Money, why should he send me money?—he never did so before, I don't want money.”

Here poor Mary burst into a paroxysm of tears, which were only checked by the cries of her child, who was beginning to feel the increasing chillness of the air. “Poor little thing!” said she, hushing it, “no wonder you cry, you have cause to cry, when he would not stay even one moment to look upon you,—he who has never yet done so!” And at this reflection her tears flowed afresh: but as she retraced her steps homeward, she recollected she must suppress her affliction before her poor father, who was already sufficiently aggrieved on her account; and then with all the sophistry of a woman's nature, which always endeavours to make excuses for what it loves, even when there are none to be made, she argued—“He was busy, he was hurried, perhaps, and men are not like women, they never think of other people's feelings when they are engaged or in a hurry. It was—it must be so, for even were he neglectful of her, he could not but be anxious to see his child, whom he had never yet beheld.”—So argued poor Mary, till false hope again filled the aching void that disappointment had left in her heart. But again she repaired to the dell, and this time she waited till past midnight, drenched with rain, and almost blinded with lightning; but he never came.

O what degrees there are in misery! This time she would have given all she possessed in the world to have had even such another cold letter as the last. Still, once again she went, it was the last time, at least to meet him; frantically, yet breathlessly, she clung to the shrubs that hung from the rock, as though their leaves had

“voiceless words” that could tell her something she did not know, but longed yet dreaded to hear ; her eyes strained upward to the old ruin, and one hand passionately straining back her fair and silken hair, that nothing might impede the faintest sound of his approach. In this state of painful suspense, if that can be called suspense which seems to realize our worst fears, she had waited above an hour, when a slight rustling was heard among the shrubs. “William ! William !” almost screamed poor Mary ; and “William !” echoed through the dell, as she sank at the foot of the rock nearly lifeless ; but no William was there. When she revived, a letter only was lying at her feet ; she tore it open and read as follows :—

“Woman, cease to persecute me ; the fittest place for you is the House of Correction. As I suppose, your father, being a respectable man, will disown you when he knows that you are no more my wife than I am yours, I being, I am sorry to say, married already ; and as for your brat, thanks to the New Poor Laws, you can have no claim upon me for that, especially after the ten sovereigns I sent you last week. There is no use in your attempting to follow me, for I shall have left the country before another hour. I hope this may be a warning to you not to be so forward another time to any future

“WILLIAM DALE.”

This, then, was what she had watched, waited, hoped, feared, and suffered for in every possible shape ! She did not scream, she did not swoon, she did not even shed a single tear : there she sat on that mossy stone, pale as marble, and as mute ; the rock itself might have fallen upon her, she could not have felt it. Poor creature ! she did not suffer ; for reason, that cruel beacon that points out all our woes, had left her, and there she might have remained had not Richard Brindal, while transacting some moonlight business in the old abbey for his friends the smugglers, towards midnight, had his attention attracted by something white.

Upon looking over the rock to see that no one lurked beneath, having taken the precaution to prime and load his gun, he descended noiselessly by the little winding path into the glen ; and once there he cried out boldly to the figure beneath the rock, “Who goes there ?” but receiving no answer to his third interrogation, he levelled his piece and was about to fire, when the moon, at that moment emerging from a cloud, discovered the form, of what he at that time thought the ghost, of Mary Lee ? “Why, Mary,” said he, going up to her, “how now, what brings thee here, child, in this lonely place at this lonely hour ? Go home, my partridge, man-traps are useless in such a place as this—ha ! ha ! ha !”—and the ruffian laughed till the still and solemn air returned an echo like a chorus of fiends ; “go home, there’s a good girl,” continued he, pushing her with the butt-end of his gun, “your child will be wanting you, I’m thinking.”

“Ah !” cried the poor maniac, pressing the gun to her bosom,

“poor baby, hush, hush, hush, ! or they will send us to the House of Correction, and they are all William Dales there ; not my William, for they’ve killed him, but Williams that they keep to write those letters. Hush, hush ! or they’ll shower down upon us those letters made out of the rocks till they kill us.”

“Poor thing !” said Brindall, while symptoms of humanity actually glistened in his eyes, “if she ain’t gone clean out of her reason: I must get her home as well as I can;” and fearing the gun might go off, he extricated it from her as gently as possible, and hiding it in some underwood, he took the unresisting girl in his arms and carried her out of the glen, when she followed him without again uttering a sound till she reached the door of her father’s cottage, when the shrill bark of a little Scotch terrier from within seemed to rouse her into a temporary and painful consciousness; she stared wildly for a few moments at Brindal, and then placing her finger on her lip, said, “Hush, William, don’t you speak, I’ll tell my father all, and he’ll be so glad to see you at last.”

The wretched father, who had been anxiously waiting for his daughter’s return, and wondering and fearing at her delay, now undid the door, little imagining the climax of misery that awaited him. There stood Mary, totally unconscious of his presence: those eyes which that very morning had been soft and clear as heaven’s own blue, now glared with the fearful fire of insanity; those cheeks, which a few hours before had been blushing and downy as the hues of a ripe peach on a sunny wall, were now white as ashes, save a burning spot in one of them, which looked as if it were consuming her.

“Master Lee,” said Brindal, brushing away a tear with the back of his hand, “this is the worst night’s work I ever did, to bring her back to you in this state, but still it was better than leaving her to die in the glen; don’t ee say nothing to her, poor thing, don’t ee, but get her quietly to bed.”

Brindal’s request was useless, for poor Lee could not speak. He drew the poor maniac to him; and as her head sank upon her shoulder, her hand relaxed its grasp of the fiend-like letter that had brought her to that state. Brindal caught it as it fell, and gave it to her father. “Mayhap,” said he, “this may tell you more than I can about poor Mary.”

It did indeed tell but too well what it was almost beyond the old man’s power to bear. “Monster ! demon ! whoever you are !” exclaimed he, grinding his teeth, and raising his clenched hand, with which he impotently struck the air—“but I will not curse you; for there are no words strong enough to wrench curses from the depths of hell for deeds like these. No, no, I will not curse you,” he continued, gently parting the hair off Mary’s pale and vacant face; “the reason that has left this poor beautiful innocent

head—ay ! innocent despite ten thousand fiends—will rush to God, and plead for surer vengeance than a poor worm's like mine ; but that too the villain shall have, if he's above ground. Mary ! my poor Mary ! my best child ! and has it come to this ? Well, I was too proud of you, and it was right that I should be humbled ; but you, you were never proud ; and all things loved you well, even the bad and the wicked—yes, the wicked. And so the foul fiend grew jealous, and came in person to talk to you of love. Ha ! ha ! ha ! that is right ; work away, my brave boy, at his bridal jewel-box, and I will get the wedding shrouds ready.”

This last sentence of the old man's raving was addressed to his son, who was working late in an inner room at a workhouse coffin. Every dull dense blow of the hammer fell like a doom amidst the silent idiocy of the unhappy girl, and the furious ravings of the wretched father. Brindal, who had been leaning with his head and face against the wall, subdued, for the first time in his rugged and warring life, into more than feminine softness and infantine fear, actually shook like a leaf, as he now noiselessly opened the door of the inner room, where George Lee was at work, and requested him to desist from his occupation. “Why?” inquired the young man. A choking sensation in his throat prevented Brindal from replying ; but pointing to the outer room, he again buried his face in his folded arms against the wall, and, for the first and the last time in his life, sobbed like a child.

It is needless to describe the renewed misery that ensued when young Lee joined his wretched sister, and still more wretched father. The former he silently carried to bed, from which she did not rise till many months afterwards. Old Lee and his son that very night left their home in quest of the soi-disant William Dale, and for many months was their fruitless search continued ; and both father and son, who had hitherto seldom or never been known to enter a public-house, now spent their whole time from one to another, within fifteen miles round, not indeed drinking, for, beyond an occasional pipe, nothing passed their lips ; but the espionage of the French police, under the ancien régime, never exceeded the vigilant and minute scrutiny with which they possessed themselves of every fact relative to the identity and locality of each new individual that they encountered, in the vain hope of at last lighting upon William Dale ; but without any other result than that of their business declining, and the daily decreasing comforts of their now desolate home. The little garden, once so neat and blooming, was a wilderness of weeds, in which every stray half-starved horse or donkey grazed, and the poultry-yard contained little save the skeleton pinions of its former inmates, left from the superfluities of some carrion crow, with an old hen or two, with drooping feathers and cramped limbs, fain to support themselves

on one solitary leg, while the gates were broken and off their hinges. The interior of the cottage had, if possible, undergone a greater change, still kept perfectly clean by the maid, who minded poor Mary, and nursed her child. Yet all around wore the coldness and stillness of death; for there is a mysterious sympathy in inanimate things, especially those household and familiar ones, that seems to sadden with our sadness, and grieve with our grief. It may be but fancy; but on leaving a place for ever that has been our home, I have always thought that the chairs and tables looked less bright, and more solemn and fixed than was their wont: but in poor Lee's cottage this was fact, not fancy. The Dutch clock, with its parterre of peonies and eglantines, no longer preached its hourly sermon of admonitory ticks. It had been stopped, for its noise seemed to rouse Mary into a sort of vague but torturing consciousness of those gone-by hours, when she used to watch its hands with such anxiety. The cheerful flower-pots no longer graced the windows. The old china and strings of birds' eggs were dimmer and more dusty than of yore. The bird-cages were now empty. Old Lee still took in the Penny Magazine; but the leaves remained uncut among the three or four dozen of books that rested upon a piece of green baize on the top of an old walnut-tree chest of drawers. The old brazen-clasped Bible was the only one, with the exception of an odd volume of Burns, now ever opened by him. Amid coloured prints of the Last Supper, Moses in the Bulrushes, and Death and the Lady, hung the chef-d'œuvre of poor Mary's industry, a sampler, commencing with the following hymn, and terminating in a parrot, of a plumage so heterogeneous that it would have puzzled the best ornithologist extant.

“ God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

“ Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

“ Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

“ Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace:
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.”

Often might poor Mary be seen with her mild but vacant eyes fixed on these words, and often would she hush the cries of her child by mechanically pointing to their bright colours. Deserted by

all her former companions, (for not an ugly girl in the village but crossed over to the opposite side of the way, as if afraid of contamination, when they had occasion to pass Lee's cottage,) none ever obtruded on her solitude, save the charitable Mrs. Stokes, and Madge Brindal, a gipsy sister of Richard's, who used to play with her child for hours, and weave vague prophecies of love and vengeance, to try and rouse her from the state of torpor in which she was sunk; and sometimes Madge, with her wild dark eyes and mysterious voice, succeeded but too well; and the calm and passive idiot swelled and foamed into the uncontrolled and uncontrollable maniac. These paroxysms were always succeeded by such a state of physical weakness, that little hope seemed to remain of her life: but there is a vitality in madness that seems to set all corporeal laws at defiance, and Mary recovered, to feel and to suffer. Are they not, at least with a woman, synonymous? Her eldest brother was apprenticed to a shoemaker in London, with strict injunctions from his father, night and day, to prosecute his enquiries about William Dale.

Old Lee and his second son, when they did meet beneath their own roof at work or at meals, like Trappists, exchanged but one sentence, which was invariably the same, namely, "Well, have you heard any tidings of him?" and the negative that ensued was followed by total silence. At the end of a year, poor Mary partially recovered her senses, but the profound melancholy that succeeded was even more heart-rending to all, save the wretched father, who felt as grateful for his child's recovered reason as though she had been restored to him from the dead. With that delicacy of tact which genuine feeling always inspires, neither he nor her brother ever alluded to the past, nor did Mary; but whenever the former took her child upon his knee, the blood would rush into her cheeks, and the tears into her eyes, and she would hurry away to the mechanical performance of some household work, or effort to achieve some long missing comfort for the poor old man. Mary longed to know more of her own history than she could remember: every time she read that fatal and brutal letter, (which, with the cunning of insanity, she had contrived to secure and secrete), her brain seemed to stereotype the words in fire. And this told her own individual history but too plainly: her only unsolved wonder was, how her father had become acquainted with it, and how he had borne it; and of this Madge Brindal by degrees informed her. As she recovered sufficiently again to employ herself, the benevolent Mrs. Stokes, feeling for her deplorable situation, and the decreasing comforts of her once happy, and, for her sphere of life, affluent home, busied herself in obtaining plain work for her. It was about fifteen months after the events recorded at the commencement of this chapter, that Lord and Lady De Clifford, having come down to Blichingly for the shooting

season, Mrs. Stokes made interest with Lady De Clifford's maid to employ Mary as a sempstress ; which she did, by giving her some frocks to make for little Julia. About seven o'clock of a fine September evening, Mary, having completed her work, put on a deep close bonnet, and taking a back-way through the fields, repaired with it to the Park. On arriving there, Mrs. Frump politely requested she would rest herself in the housekeeper's room, although such hospitality was expressly contrary to her mistress's commands, from the circumstance of she herself being in the habit of paying frequent and impromptu visits to that domestic head-quarters. Mary, however, declined this contraband and perilous invitation, and requested to be shown immediately into the presence of Lady De Clifford's maid, with whom her business was. Frump having rung the bell, and desired a housemaid to conduct her upstairs to Berryl's work-room, she ascended the back-stairs as noiselessly and quickly as possible. In crossing the music-gallery, as she was turning into the corridor, where the bedrooms were situated, her shawl was caught by the sharp corner of a pedestal ; in turning to disengage it, she beheld a bust of Lord De Clifford. It was with the greatest possible effort that she prevented herself from uttering a scream. At this sudden apparition of those features so deeply and fatally engraven upon her memory, she was on the point of asking the housemaid whose bust it was ; but poor Mary had long felt as if the very sound of her own voice was to publish her shame, and the wish died away unspoken. "Come in," said Berryl, in reply to the housemaid's knock. "A young woman from the village, ma'am," said the latter, ushering in Mary, "who has brought home Miss Grimstone's frocks."

"O you are very punctual, I must say," said Berryl, patronisingly, as she placed a half-finished cap she was making on a block before her, "very punctual indeed ; and the work is very neat ; extremely so," continued she, scrutinising the tucks. "Do you think you would be able to braid a velvet frock, a *violet* velvet with narrow gold Russian braid, for my young lady against the beginning of next week ?"

"I'll try, ma'am," said Mary, modestly.

"Well, I'll hexplain to you how it is to be done," said Berryl, opening the drawer of a wardrobe, and taking out the velvet : "the lapels is to be"—so far had she got in her directions, when a loud voice was heard calling, "Berryl, Berryl."

"Coming, my lord, directly," cried she, throwing down the velvet with a gesture of impatience. At the sound of that voice a shudder and a faintness came over Mary Lee. Berryl prepared to leave the room, but, before she could do so, the door opened, and Lord De Clifford, in his shooting-jacket and shoes, his gun under his arm, and a slip of paper in his hand, flung open the door.

“Berryl!” said he, not perceiving Mary, who stood in the shadow of the wardrobe, her heart standing still as she tried to catch every sound of that voice, that seemed like a fiery serpent to be hissing through her brain; while Lord De Clifford’s back being turned to her as he spoke to Berryl at the door, she could not at first distinguish his face.

“Berryl, Carlton is going to town this evening; send this by him to Howel and James’s, and write yourself, besides, telling them exactly the faults in the collars of the last shirts—they want more cutting out in the joining, or something; and put down the name of the satin you say I like for neckcloths — here, here’s my list,” and as he spoke he held it out to her; but before she could take it, Mary sprang forward and seized it, exclaiming, with a loud shriek and wild hysterical laugh, as she grasped Lord De Clifford’s arm tightly,—“So, William Dale, William Dale, I have found you at last;—father, I have found him!—George, I have found him!—him, the real William—not the one who wanted to send me to the House of Correction. No, no! he has been properly punished, they have turned him to stone, and he stands in a corner of this house, looking so cold, and so ghastly, and so grand, but so terrible! His eyes look like petrified curses, but indeed I did not curse him. No, no, I did not—but that letter did, and here is another just like it, the same writing exactly, but the words won’t stand still for me to read them. There, there,” continued she, plunging it in her bosom—“there, I’ll hide it, for fear they should turn you to stone with it, as they did the other William; but he was false, and cruel, and deserved it. Let us go, William—let us go,—don’t stay here—the very air feels unkind in this place. We will go to the dell—there are fairies there, and they all know us, and we’ll dance with them in the moonlight. Madge told me I should be revenged; and will it not be a fine revenge to bury that stone William Dale in the Fairies’ Bath? and when he cries to be taken out, the other little white round stones will mock and laugh at him, and tell him not to persecute them, but to go to the House of Correction—ha! ha! ha!”

“D——n it, what the d——l brought her here?” said Lord De Clifford, frowning fearfully, and endeavouring to shake off the poor wretched girl; but madness was stronger than brute force, and she did not relax her grasp.

“Poor thing!” said Berryl, compassionately, “you must excuse her, my lord, she is subject to fits of insanity; for hers is a sad story,—your lordship may have heard it perhaps. She is daughter to the most respectablest man in all the village, old Lee, the carpenter. She has been cruelly used and deserted by some villain, about a year and a half ago, and she has never been in her right mind since.”

“And what the deuce was she doing up here?” asked Lord De

Clifford angrily, without evincing the slightest compunction for the scene of wretchedness before him.

“Why, being very poor, I gave her some frocks to make for Miss Grimstone, and she brought them home, my lord, this evening.”

“I really think you might have found a person of less equivocal character to work for my daughter; but get her some water, for I believe she is fainting.”

Poor Mary's head had indeed sunk exhausted upon the shoulder of her brutal and unfeeling destroyer. Berryl walked over to the washing-slab, and filled out a glass of water, but Lord De Clifford's object being to get her out of the way, in order to try and intimidate Mary into going quietly home, he changed his genuine inhumanity into his mother's ever diplomatically successful *suaviter in modo fortiter in re* line of conduct, and when Berryl brought the water, he said in a pitying tone, “Poor girl! she seems so very weak, that I think wine would be better for her; go down and ask for some claret.”

As Berryl closed the door, she could not help muttering to herself—“Well, I do declare it was too bad to talk about poor Mary's character when she was lying quite mad, and nearly dead, before him; but them there sort of profligate men, as every one knows he is, is so severe on us women; but it always was so, even in the Bible, for how wicked and spiteful Amnon was against Tamar; while no one ever heard of Joseph's saying a bad word of Mrs. Potiphar, though she richly deserved it; but men who behave themselves properly, never speak ill of the women.”

No sooner had Berryl gone, than Lord De Clifford shook Mary rudely, and, calling her by the most opprobrious names, threatened to give her in charge to a constable, if she did not instantly leave the house. This roused the poor girl into a sort of half reason, that filled her with a bitter and burning hatred of her cruel and fiend-like betrayer. “Know, woman, whom you are speaking to,” cried he; “I am not William Dale that you rave about, I am Lord De Clifford, son to the owner of these broad lands, upon which you and your family are poor mean serfs.”

Wounded pride is a necromancer that converts the strongest love into the strongest and most implacable hate; let no man therefore be surprised, when he has sharpened a woman's heart upon the whetstone of insult, if it becomes a two-edged sword, and is pointed against himself. Mary Lee seemed changed as if by a magician's wand on the instant; no longer (even in madness) the soft, the gentle, the affectionate, the enduring, the forgiving victim. Reason seemed to have returned to her, as a gigantic and mighty weapon. She drew herself up to her full height, scorn quivered in her lip, hatred curdled her cheek, vengeance burned and lightened in her eyes: there she stood like an embodied curse, as if her very breath had power to wither her betrayer; even he trembled beneath the

loud, relentless, deliberate tone in which she spoke; every word that fell upon his ear seemed like a prophecy impelled by its own force to its own fulfilment. As William Dale, Mary still hoped, and therefore could have forgiven; but in the conviction that her seducer was Lord De Clifford, she felt the premeditation of the insult, the hopelessness, the irreparableness of the injury.

"You are Lord De Clifford," said she, slowly and distinctly, as she folded her arms and measured him with a scornful look from head to foot; "then listen to what you are. You are in your own opinion a great lord — in that of the world, your own great world, a pompous, proud, disagreeable man — in that of the poor, a sordid, avaricious tyrant, who promises great things in his speeches at elections, and does mean ones to every one sufficiently humble to allow him to do so with impunity—and in mine, you are a cold, selfish, remorseless villain, whose dark deeds (despite this world's might, which is always right) will yet, and that at no far distant time, work out their own punishment."

Luckily for herself, during this scene Lady De Clifford was below stairs, in the billiard-room, rolling about the balls to amuse her little girl; but the Dowager being in her own room, which was opposite to the one in which Berryl worked, was startled by the loud excited tone of Mary's voice; she opened her door, and crossed the corridor, just as Berryl returned with the wine, and following her into the room, said to her son, by way of an apology for her intrusion, "My dear, it's nearly eight o'clock; ain't you dressed for dinner yet?"

"O my dear ma'am," said he, in a tone of bland compassion, got up to suit poor Mary's restored reason, and its probable consequences—"here is a terrible business—this is poor Mary Lee that I have often heard you mention. Poor girl! her madness has now taken the turn of identifying me, or rather confounding my identity with that of William Dale, her seducer."

This amiable parent knew pretty well the real truth of the case, for her sons placed such unbounded confidence in her in some things, that they seldom or ever concealed any of their peccadillos from her; mothers of narrower and more fastidious minds might have felt insulted at this; but she, with juster and more liberal views, attributed it entirely to their unbounded affection for her: knowing, therefore, how matters really stood in the present instance, she merely replied—

"*Vaustly* impertinent, though, of her madness, presuming to take such a turn! Very odd, Lady De Clifford's maid employing such a person; that's one reason I do hate having other people's servants; in the house they take such liberties, and breed such confusion: very remiss in Frump never having told me of it till ten minutes ago, or I certainly should have made Mr. Tymmons

warn her off the premises as she came through the park, for I'll have no such hussies coming here."

"O, my dear mother," interposed her son, still more amiably than before, "poor thing! she appears more to be pitied than blamed."

"I'm sure, my dear, it does great credit to your head and *heart* to say so, and gentlemen, I know, are not so particular about these things as ladies, but you must allow it is very unpleasant to have such people brought into one's house."

"She will soon be out of it, my lady," said Berryl, darting a look of indignation at her; "for I sent for her father, when I was down stairs, to take her home, poor thing!"

Footsteps being now heard, her ladyship also thought fit to assume a bland tone, and turning to Mary, said, "My good girl, now do go home—one of the servants shall go with you; you see it's all a mistake; this gentleman is Lord De Clifford, my son, and we know nothing at all about *this here* William Dale that you've been a talking about."

Mary neither spoke nor moved, but surveyed the old lady's withered and hypocritical visage with ineffable contempt. At any other time, both mother and son would have resented such conduct in a very summary and arbitrary manner; but, as the artificers of her ruin, they were in her power, and they felt it,—to say nothing of vulgar spurious pride like theirs being always mortgaged with a counterpoise of meanness and cowardice. A telegraphic look now passed between them, upon which her ladyship advanced, and affectionately placed her hand upon Mary's arm; but the poor "lowborn serf" started at the touch, and shook her off as though a serpent had stung her.

"Poor thing!" resumed the ancient dissembler, in a tone of counterfeit feeling that a Jesuit might have envied—"poor thing, it is easy to see how her wits wander."

"So much so," said Mary, in a tone of withering scorn, "that had I not known you by repute these eighteen years, I might almost believe, from your manner now, that you had some touch of human feeling."

"'Pon my word, this is too inso——."

"My dearest mother," interrupted her amiable son, (for a knock was now heard at the door), "you must make allowances for insanity." This last word was uttered at the top of his voice as he added, "Come in," to the person at the door, and a footman entered, saying, "Lee the carpenter is in the passage, my lord."

"Tell him to come in."

The old man entered with a pale and agitated face. "Servant, my lady—servant, my lord; I fear my poor girl, from her dreadful affliction, may have frightened you," said he, walking kindly up to Mary, who held out her hand to him.

"Make no apologies, my good fellow," dulcified Lord De Clifford, adding, as he turned up his eyes, "madness is indeed an awful dispensation of Providence."

"Father," said Mary, solemnly, as she walked resolutely into the midst of the assembled group, which now only consisted of her father, Lord De Clifford, and his mother, who, with her usual prudence, had desired Berryl to leave the room—"father, I am not mad; I have been mad, and I may be so again, but I am not mad now, and the man you have sought night and day, that you have watched for early and late, that you have left all things to seek, till all things have left you—that man now stands before you! that man is not William Dale, but Lord De Clifford!"

The old man turned from what he thought the distempered ravings of his afflicted child, with a look of hopeless wretchedness, to the author of it all, who pityingly shrugged his shoulders, and sighed out, "Poor thing!"

Again Mary repeated more solemnly and collectedly than before, "I am not mad, father; under the assumed name of William Dale, and in the pretended guise of a farmer's son, that man wrought your temporal and my eternal ruin;—before you, he affects to pity me, but when I was alone with him, not half an hour ago, there was no threat, however mean and brutal, he did not use towards me. You still think I rave—look at his features, and look at my child's; that child has, as you know, the mark of a strawberry on the right side of his throat—so has that man, and I challenge him to show it—I dare him to deny it."

"Do, my lord, have the goodness to humour her, by showing her that you have no strawberry on your throat," asked old Lee, imploringly; but both mother and son now lost their temper at being driven as it were into a corner, from which they could see no chance of escape, except by bullying and bravado.

"Really, 'pon my soul, this is going a little too far, my friend," said Lord De Clifford. "There's no knowing what lengths your daughter's insanity may reach next, and I really cannot comply with any proposition so absurd."

The poor carpenter looked at the great man with somewhat of the contempt that his daughter had previously bestowed upon him; and this refusal on his part did more to convince Lee of Mary's sanity than anything she could have done or said.

"No, depend upon it, he will not show it," resumed Mary, calmly; "but there is something that I will and can show, that may convince you that William Dale and Lord De Clifford are one and the same person;" and as she spoke, she drew from her pocket the letter-case, out of which she took the letter addressed to her by William Dale, and taking from her bosom the list Lord

De Clifford had written out and signed for Howell and James, she handed them to her father, saying—

“Compare these two hands as minutely as you will, and you’ll find the one an exact copy of the other.” As Lee received them, the dowager, being through passion thrown completely off her guard, made a snatch at them, but he held them tightly over his head.

“Your ladyship must excuse me,” said he; “you, I am inclined to think, need no proofs of your son’s guilt—I do; to me they may be useful,”—and so saying, he walked to the window and compared the two writings, which were indeed fac-similes. When the examination was over, the old man groaned aloud, and walking up to Mary, drew her arm within his own. “Poor child!” said he, “let us leave this accursed house.”

“You,” said he, as he passed Lord De Clifford, who stood with his arms folded, his lips compressed, his nostrils dilating, and his eyes glaring like a demon—“you are a rich and a great man, I am a poor and a lowly one, but there is the same God in heaven for us both, and we shall meet again.”

“I’m sure, my dear,” said his virtuous and exemplary parent, as the old man closed the door, “I hope this will be a lesson to you never again to have anything to say to those sort of low girls, but keep more among your equals in all these here *affaires de CUR*! for you see, my dear, what insolence it subjects you to.”

Mary Lee from that day was an altered being; though her reason wandered occasionally, yet it was but for short intervals, and those “few and far between.” She seemed as though, from a mighty effort within herself, to retain it against its will, so as to gratify the burning and unquenchable thirst for vengeance that now consumed her; but to strangers, and even to her chief friend and counsellor Madge Brindal, she often assumed a degree of imbecility that was far from real, in furtherance of her designs, which were, never to lose sight of Lord De Clifford’s plans as far as she could ascertain them, in the hope of achieving that vague and shadowy revenge which, matured as it was by Madge’s mysterious prophecies, became a part and attribute of her existence. And Lord De Clifford! what change did this dark episode make in his existence? None, save that of determining him to go abroad a little sooner than he otherwise might have done, and leaving Blichingly immediately. What other change could it make? for no one knew poor Mary Lee, and every one knew Lord De Clifford—a Mecænas, in his way, a spawner of Whig pamphlets, and a crack political writer in the “Edinburgh;” he crammed newspaper editors with good dinners, and they crammed him with praise; he figured in paragraph after paragraph as “that enlightened and patriotic nobleman, whose liberal policy and just views had

triumphed over the accident of birth and the prejudice of station, and who, to his eternal honour be it spoken, had taught the people that all greatness, all freedom, all justice, and all morals! must emanate from themselves!

With regard to his personal and individual code, when his vices did not interfere more actively, his was that philosophy of indolence which the epicurean Roman taught, and which looks upon life only as a visionary pageant, and death as the deep sleep that succeeds the dream. Such philosophy, "falsely so called," ever has been, and ever will be, destructive of all pure and lofty feelings—an antidote to all that is ennobling and good—a plague-spot, dark, pestilent, and all-corrupting, in the soul of that man who harbours it. And did the image of poor Mary Lee, a wreck in mind, body, and soul, never overshadow his pleasures, or shake his ambition? It has been ascertained that there is iron enough in the blood of forty-two men to make a ploughshare weighing about twenty-four pounds: Lord De Clifford had reversed the order of nature in this, as in most other things—he had iron enough in his single composition to have made forty-two ploughshares.

CHAPTER XV.

If it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge.

He hath disgraced me, and hindered me—laughed

At my losses

Cooled my friends, heated mine enemies.—MERCHANT OF VENICE.

A tale of human power—despair not—list and learn!

I looked, and lo! one stood forth eloquently!

The eyes were dark and deep, and the clear brow

Which shadow'd them was like the morning sky.

The cloudless heaven of spring, when in their flow

Through the light air the soft winds as they blow

Wake the green world;—her gestures did obey

The ocular mind that made the features glow.

P. B. SHELLEY.

What, returned, captain!—SCHILLER'S *Robbers*.

WHEN Mrs. Stokes reached Mary Lee's cottage it was almost dark, for the clouds had again gathered in black masses, and predicted an impending storm. She hurried up the little wilderness of a garden, and finding the door shut, tapped at the window; but receiving no answer, she tried to raise the latch of the door, which, however, resisted her efforts, being locked from within.

"Dear me, how provoking!" said Mrs. Stokes, as large drops of rain began to fall, and a loud peal of thunder rolled above her as though it would rend the heavens; "they cannot be all out, surely? Bless me, how it lightens!" and Mrs. Stokes placed her

hand before her eyes, and hurried round to the back of the house, to seek admittance there; but the thunder grew louder and louder, and her appeals for admittance were either unheard or unheeded. "How very tiresome!" reiterated Mrs. Stokes; "I shall be drowned. I'll try and get in at the window of Lee's work room." So saying, she walked up to it, but stood transfixed to the spot at the scene she beheld within.

In the large old chimney blazed a wood-fire, on which was placed a tripod, surmounted by a large black iron pot; in one corner of the ample chimney stood a bundle of green fagots; in the opposite one was a cradle, in which slept a rosy-cheeked child of about three years old, unconscious alike of the scene within and the storm without; while on the top of the cradle, like a tutelary saint, sat a large black cat, with one white ring round her tail, the tail itself being curled round her paws, while she was luxuriating in that dignified and perpendicular sleep, which only cats, dogs, and somnambulists enjoy. At one side of the cradle, in fearful proximity to the fire, (unless his paws were insured,) lay a mosaic of sleeping, watching, and waking, in the person of little Wasp, the Scotch terrier. Two vacant high-backed chairs were at either side of the fireplace on the outside of the chimney; in the seat of one of them was a very dirty pack of cards, a pewter soup-plate full of a dark-looking fluid, a cut lemon, and a raw pigeon, with the entrails taken out; on the back of the other chair hung a gipsy hat and a red cloak, and in the seat of it was a pair of thick but small shoes, with very large silver buckles; round the white-washed walls of the room glittered and gleamed, like death's armoury, various sized leaden coffin-plates and handles; against the wall opposite the window, on a large deal work-board, was a large-sized but lidless coffin, apparently just finished; the floor was covered with shavings and carpenter's tools—all, save a circle, in the centre of which were marked and chalked out several rectangular lines; within this circle stood Mary Lee and Madge Brindal, the former in the black dress and Quaker-like cap she always wore; her fair hair parted on her high clear forehead; her cheeks colourless, but still with that sort of pale bloom that is seen in a Provence rose; her mouth was the only citadel that health had not deserted—it was full and rich as ever; the beautifully curved short upper-lip gently parted, like a twin-cherry, from the red pouting under one;—yes, health still seemed as though it clung to

—"Those yet cool lips to share,
The last pure life that linger'd there."

Her small, white, and almost shadowy hands were crossed upon her bosom, as she peered into the mysterious depths of her companion's wild prophetic eyes, as though time and eternity were to

be read within them. Through the almost Ethiopian darkness of Madge Brindal's cheek was a rich red glow, like that of fire against a midnight sky; her profile was chiselled in the most perfect Greek outline; the mouth was handsome, but somewhat sensual—but then the teeth within it were so pearl-like and costly, that no wonder it seemed a little epicurean; her eyes were large, dark, and lustrous in the extreme, and would have been fierce, but that they were curtained with lashes, so long and so soft, that they almost made one sleepy to look at them; the brows above them were low, straight, and intellectual; her hair, which was of that purple black seldom seen but on a raven's wing, was braided back beneath a red handkerchief, put on much after the fashion of an elderly Roman Contadina; not much above the middle size, her full and voluptuous figure might have been heavy, had it been less perfectly moulded. She wore a short green, glazed, stuff petticoat, with a short bedgown of bright red striped calico, the sleeves of which were now turned up, displaying a beautifully rounded arm, singularly white compared to her hands, which were brown, and rather coarse—this being rendered the more apparent by being covered with very showy but trumpery-looking gold and silver rings, glittering with coloured stones; on her feet were bright blue worsted stockings, without shoes; and just before them was placed a small brazier, from which issued a thick, dense smoke, as ever and anon Madge threw into it with her left hand some mystic powder, while with her right she waved over it a green cypress branch, repeating at the same time some low unintelligible words.

Such was the picture that presented itself to the astounded and disconsolate Mrs. Stokes, as she peered in through a hole in the window-shutter, the fire-light blazing before her, and the lightning flashing behind; while the wind whistled, and the hail stones rattled against the windows, like dice in a dice-box. “The Lord have mercy upon me!” cried she, her knees trembling, and her teeth chattering a second to the contralto of the hail. “What in the name of wickedness are they about? I shall never be able to make them hear me, for the noise of this terrible storm. If John Stokes had been a man—but then every one knows he is n't—he'd have come with me, and not have let me come out alone such an evening as this.”

Now it is evident that Mrs. Stokes's metaphysical and logical perspicuity must have been completely uprooted by the storm; and that she was incapable of reasoning categorically, or she must have remembered that Tommy and her own orders (and which had the most weight in her menage, it would have puzzled Archimedes and all his successors to decide) were the sole causes of Mr. Stokes not having braved the storm without as well as that

within. Scarcely had Mrs. Stokes uttered this zoological assertion with regard to her husband, when a peal of thunder and a flash of lightning, more awful than the last, seemed to threaten her with instant deafness and blindness; but “*fiat justitia, ruat cœlum.*” So Mrs. Stokes, at that very moment, bethought herself, that being as deficient in ubiquity as in most other talents, her sposo could not at one and the same moment be taking up the stitches the cat had dropped, and holding that itinerant waterspout, ’ycleped an umbrella, over her head; therefore, with a candour and recantation of error peculiar to great minds, she added a protocol to her last sentence of—“Oh! I forgot.” Again Mrs. Stokes approached the aperture in the shutter, and gazed upon the scene within, when to her horror she beheld upon the whitened wall of the room the phantasmagoria of a horse galloping down a precipice; a man thrown from it, and a red stream flowing from him. The face she could not distinguish, as it was upon it that he had fallen. The smoke now rose from the brazier in such dense masses, while Madge continued to repeat her incantations over it, that the whole phantom became obscured by it; and when at length it was succeeded by a clear blue lambent flame, the plain wall became visible and colourless as before, while the lurid flame played upon Mary’s pale fixed features and unearthly looking eyes, leaving her as like a shade, to all appearance, as the one she had just witnessed. Madge stood gazing inquiringly into her face, while she held the cypress branch triumphantly above her head, pointed at the wall. This she continued to do for a few seconds, and then let it drop into the lidless coffin.

Mrs. Stokes could bear no more. Her teeth chattered, her head reeled. She with difficulty supported herself against the wall, as she muttered—“The Lord have mercy upon me! If they ain’t a raising the devil, or doing something worse! Poor Mary, to be sure, she has no reason left to know better; but that witch of Endor, Madge Brindal, deserves to be dragged through a horse-pond for such diabolical doings, and I’ll break open the door and tell her so.”

Here Mrs. Stokes suited the action to the word, and vigorously pushed her by no means slight person against the door, which shook beneath, without yielding to the attack. She was preparing to return to the charge, when the remembrance of the mysterious evil wrought by Richard Brindal (aided, no doubt, by his sister’s necromancy) on all to whom he owed a grudge, checked her, and she resolved not to interfere in what evidently did not concern her, but go quietly round to the other side, and again try if she could not effect an entrance at the front door.

With this prudent resolve, Mrs. Stokes walked, or rather swam, into the front garden, where the wind was less violent than at the

back of the house; and where, consequently, her appeals for admission had a better chance of being heard. While Mrs. Stokes was still knocking with a stone against the cottage door, she heard a rustling in the hedge on her left hand, and presently a loud, well-toned, deep voice, bearing evident symptoms of inebriety, from occasional hiccuppings and tremulousness, singing—

“The Deil came fiddling through the town,
And danced awa wi’ the exciseman;
And ilka wife cried ‘Auld Mahoun,
We wish you luck o’ the prize, man.’

“We’ll mak our maut, and brew our drink,
We’ll dance, and sing, and rejoice, man;
And monie thanks to the mickle black Deil
That danced awa wi’ the exciseman.

“There’s threesome reels and foursome reels,
There’s hornpipes and strathspeys, man:
But the ae best dance e’er cam to our lan’
Was—the Deil’s awa wi’ the exciseman.

We’ll mak our maut,” etc.

“Why, bless me!” cried Mrs. Stokes, as the singer cleared the hedge, and stood beside her, “Captain Datchet! that’s never you, to be sure? If I did not think you was away in the Ingees!”

“Ship a-hoy there!” cried the person so addressed, unceremoniously placing his arm round Mrs. Stokes’s substantial waist, and drawing her towards him, “where are you steering for, my trim little craft, with the wind right ahead—eh?”

“Lor, captain, do let me go,” said Mrs. Stokes, struggling to free herself; “I see you hain’t left none o’ your old tricks behind you. But I expect John Stokes here every moment, and though he is sich a hatomy, it would never do for him to find you at this work.”

“Why, my pretty chaffinch, is that you,” said the stranger, releasing Mrs. Stokes’s waist, and grasping her hand like a cable, and shaking it violently; “why, what made you weigh anchor such a night as this? and how is honest John? forgotten the very smell of real Cognac, I suppose. I’ve been so many months away, and you, I suspect, have begun to doubt whether there are any more ribbons made in France, you have been so long fain to put up with a poor mongrel Coventry top-knot: but my name is not Miles Datchet if you do n’t soon hoist gayer pennants than ever, that shall you;” and here he wrung her hand more violently than ever.

Miles Datchet was a great man in his way, having committed every crime short of murder, and being so totally devoid of every species of principle, as to be almost fit for a prime minister, except that he was never known to break faith with his coadjutors, and was notorious for that species of honour proverbially to be found among thieves. These shades of human weakness, which, alas! sometimes obscure the greatest minds, would certainly have mili-

tated against his obtaining the pinnacle of political greatness, and therefore it is lucky that destiny had assigned to him a career of less scope—that of a mere sea politician—alias pirate. His genius for intrigue was so great, that he had acted the part of a successful spy under several governments, faithfully serving all and each, never being able (as he philosophically observed) to discover any difference in the colour, weight, and currency of the coin of the realm, whether the helm of state were swayed by Whig or Tory; save that he had been heard to confess that it flowed more freely and certainly from the latter—as though they, like the Milesian gentleman of the road from whom their name is derived, entertained juster ideas of the distribution of wealth than most modern political economists; while the sweetest promises of the Whigs were apt to turn as soon, and become as unavailable, as the original of their own sobriquet. But in England, where morality is preached more and practised less than in any other country of the known world, Miles Datchet knew too well the value of that most powerful of all talismans, appearances, not to study them upon all occasions; consequently, his nominal calling was that of captain of a merchantman; and though he did sell French brandy, French silks, and Latikai tobacco, cheaper than English could be purchased, yet no one thought of attributing the phenomenon to any other cause but an excess of philanthropy which made him anxious touching the comforts and luxuries of all his fellow-creatures; and surely a universal philanthropist could not defraud any man, merely because he had the misfortune to be an exciseman!

Among the female portion of the community, a very handsome Salvator Rosa-like face and commanding figure might have insured his popularity, even had he been less generous in his gifts brought from all parts of the world; and, added to a great deal of natural humour, he possessed a mosaic of anecdote collected from every point of the compass. At Blichingly he was a universal favourite; and had any doubts ever been entertained of his cleverness, they would have been entirely removed, upon his having once effected a Glaucus and Diomedé exchange with Miss Mac Screw: that lady was the happy possessor of a gold box containing a nutmeg-grater, which she was wont to affirm had belonged to the Pretender.

Captain Datchet, through a mysterious eloquence known only to himself, undertook to convince her that it was pinchbeck, offering her in exchange, for the paltry sum of three guineas, a real pinchbeck one, assuming the travelling title of gold, which he said had for many years belonged to old Elwes the miser, and had always been called by him his lucky box, as, to use his own forcible words, money actually appeared to breed in it. All Blichingly was aware of the truth—save and except the fair Mac Screw herself; and as no one had the cruelty to undeceive her, her eyes

always sparkled at the sight of Miles Datchet, with the conscious pleasure of having overreached him !

Datchet's present mission to Lee's cottage was to look for Madge Brindal, who was (with all due respect to appearance) his Blichingly sultana. He had returned from the Levant, for reasons best known to himself, sooner than she, or any one else, had expected; and having been to the gipsy haunt, at the old abbey above the Fairy Bath, and finding it deserted by all save a gipsy boy, who was piqueting some donkeys in the close, he learned from him where Madge was most probably to be found, and lost no time in seeking her, which will account for his sudden apparition before Mrs. Stokes.

"But, seriously," resumed Datchet, "what could bring you out such an evening as this."

"Indeed you may well ask, captain," replied Mrs. Stokes, wringing the wet out of the skirts of her petticoats, "but it did not rain when I set out, and I came to bring Mary Lee some wine—for, poor thing! I think she grows weaker and weaker—more melancholy and moping-like; and we've had a letter from my lord, as says she's a going to marry Richard Brindal; but we hav'n't heerd nothink on it; and what's more cur'us still, he hain't heerd nothink on it either, so I'm come to hear what she says; but, lord, here have I been a knocking and knocking, first at one side of the house and then at the other, till I'm almost drowned—to say nothink of seeing the hawfullest things imaginable, and can't make them hear, do what I will."

Totally regardless of the latter part of Mrs. Stokes's speech, Datchet gave a long shrill whistle, as he took up a stone to knock at the door, and then repeated, nodding his head—

"When the dove marries with the crow,
Then we'll hear the green grass grow;
And the blind mole shall straightway find
He can see the rushing wind."

"Helo, there!" said a voice, as Datchet was again besieging the door.

"Oh! Mr. Lee," said Mrs. Stokes, turning round to the person who had called out, "I'm so glad you have come at last, for I have been trying till I am tired to get in; and only guess who's arrived?" continued she, pointing to Miles Datchet.

"How are you, my boy?" said the latter, grasping Lee's hand as cordially as he had previously done Mrs. Stokes's.

"Why, captain! what wind blew you here?" asked the old man, as he placed his carpenter's basket on the step of the door, and felt in his pockets for the latch-key.

"It's an ill wind that blows nobody good," replied Datchet, avoiding a direct answer; "and I dare say you can smell the

Virginian weed in it by this time, and it won't be the less easily smoked because I did a crew of d—d Yankees out of it; but that's an after-supper yarn; so open the door, my hearty, and let us get under hatches before another squall comes on."

"How's this?" said Lee, as he pushed open the door, and entered the dark and fireless front room of his cottage; "this is but a cold reception, captain. My poor girl! my poor girl!—I suppose she's ill again."

"No, no," interposed Mrs. Stokes good-naturedly; "don't ee fret, Master Lee, I know where she is—it's all right, only she did not expect you, I suppose; and if you and the captain will just wait here, I'll go and bring them to you, for Madge is with her." So saying, she passed her hand along the wall till she found the door, which having done, she opened, and groped her way along the narrow passage till she came to the door of the workshop, to which she was directed by the firelight which streamed from beneath it. Her first impulse was to turn the handle suddenly, and boldly appear before the guilty pair in the midst of their unhallowed rites; but Madge Brindal, the witch, deserving of a horsepond a few minutes before, was now transformed into the reigning favourite of the all-powerful Captain Datchet—a person not to be offended with impunity;—so charity and toleration—in the visionary forms of Lisle lace and silk dresses—flitted across the mind of Mrs. Stokes, and "wrought a mighty change," that caused her to knock gently at the door, and calmly enter to the as gentle response of "Come in."

All traces of the late scene had passed away. Mary and her companion were quietly seated at the fire—Mary with her arms folded, and her eyes intently fixed upon the blazing fagots before her, and Madge thrown back in her chair, with little Wasp in her lap, deluding himself into the belief that she had some hidden treasure in her hand, by holding it above her head, and keeping him on the tiptoe of expectation, like many a cleverer dog—grasping at a chimera!

"Mary, love," said Mrs. Stokes, "your father is come home, and wants some fire and some supper; and here am I, like a drowned rat, knocking for the last half-hour, first at one door and then at the other, and could not make either of you hear. What have you been about?"

"Why, who could hear in such a storm as this?" asked Madge, seeing that Mary was too much abstracted to answer; and fearing that if she did, she might let out too much of the truth.

"Why, that's true enough," rejoined Mrs. Stokes; "but if the storm was ten times greater, I suppose you could hear good news?"

"Good news! what news?" gasped Mary, with that vague

anticipation of a something which for ever haunts the wretched and the forsaken.

"Why, I have good news for you too, poor child," replied Mrs. Stokes; "but it will keep till by-and-bye, for they are waiting in the next room without either fire or light; so make haste, and let us go to them."

"And who may they and them be, pray?" inquired Madge.

"Ay, there it is now," said Mrs. Stokes; "that's my news, and it concerns you, Madge—who do you think is come back?"

"I'm sure I do n't know," said Madge, listlessly—"Richard, I suppose; for that kettle is full of rabbits and pheasants which I found here this afternoon—so I suppose he's come back from the north, for that's generally the way he leaves his card;" and Madge laughed as she rose to deaden the blaze, under the savoury mess of game and vegetables that was boiling over the fire.

"No—guess again; you are wrong for once in your life, Madge, though your brother is returned, for he was at our house this afternoon; but it is not him I mean."

"Oh, I suppose then it's Freddy Flippis, who I sent to Rushworth this morning, about a covered cart, to take us to Triverton fair."

"No, no; you must go a great deal further than Rushworth—you are *miles* away from being right yet — *miles* away, Madge;" and Mrs. Stokes held her sides as she laughed at her own wit.

"Why," said Madge, her cheek flushing and her eyes flashing, as she advanced a step or two, and looked inquiringly into Mrs. Stokes's face, "you have not heard anything of Miles Datchet, have you?—The—the captain—I mean."

"What if I had not only heard of him, but seen him?"

"Impossible!" said Madge; "he is far away at sea now; and"—

"Only a plank between him and you."

"What do you mean? do speak out," said Madge, impatiently.

"Well, well, Madge, I see you are not a witch after all; and so, to make a long story short, Captain Datchet is in the next room."

Madge rushed hastily to the door; but suddenly recollecting that Datchet, like all great men, was tenacious as to decorum, she walked leisurely back to the cradle where Mary's child was sleeping, merely saying as she passed Mrs. Stokes, "Is he really?"—and then added, turning to Mary, "I'll take up little William, if you'll carry the candle, Mary; and I dare say Mrs. Stokes will be so good as to take a burning brand in the tongs to light a fire in the next room."

All these arrangements made, accompanied by a little crying on the part of the child at being disturbed, the procession moved into the front room, headed by Mrs. Stokes with a burning log, followed by Mary with the candle, while Madge brought up the rear with the child. Mrs. Stokes lost no time in dashing forward to her destination, the fire-place, to deposit her fiery burden, and when

there, had a great deal of stooping and blowing to prevail on the damp fagots within it to imitate the example of the new arrival. Mary, as was her wont, threw her arms round her father's neck, so there was nothing left for Captain Datchet to do, in order to avoid the root of all evil—idleness—but to imprint divers salutes upon the peach-like cheeks and coral lips of Madge, under the pretext of kissing the child; while he slipped a Venice chain and a pair of Genoa earrings into her hand, which she, with equal dexterity, concealed in her bosom, acknowledging these last *gages d'amour* with a tender pressure of the hand.

"I hope, Mary, you have some supper for us?" said Lee to his daughter.

"Yes," said Madge; "thanks to Dick's return, you've no stint to-night."

"I don't like game," said the old man with a sigh, the full meaning of which Madge knew but too well partly alluded to her brother's lawless avocations, and partly to his own fallen state in having such friends and associates.

"Beggars must not be choosers," retorted Madge, her eyes flashing, and her neck stretched to its most swan-like dimensions; "and when the craft and villany of the rich man has the power of depriving us of our bread, it is lucky, to say nothing of justice, that the cunning of the poor man has sometimes the power of supplying the deficiency."

"Madge, you are right," said the old man, holding out his hand to her as he brushed away a tear with the back of the other; "and I—I—am a pusillanimous fool—but it won't always be so."

"Right! to be sure, she's right," said Datchet applaudingly, as he filled his pipe from a supply of tobacco in the side-pocket of his rough sailor's jacket, and held it to the candle; "and may all poor men who approve of

'Laws for the rich, and poor-laws for the poor,'
never have anything better, say I;"—and here he gave a puff of sufficient strength and density to have blown away — Great Marlborough Street.

"Well," said Madge, with restored good humour, "I'll go and see about supper."

"And I," cried Datchet, gallantly removing the pipe from his mouth, and sticking it in his left-hand waistcoat pocket, with the bowl upwards, "I'll go and help you."

There is a proverb which asserts that "many hands make light work." Be this as it may, it is very certain that Madge Brindal's preparations for supper did not appear at all expedited by her having the assistance of Captain Datchet, for an unaccountably long time elapsed before they returned with even the knives, forks, plates, and other preliminaries for supper. However, their absence

gave Mrs. Stokes the wished for opportunity of sounding Mary as to her reported marriage with Richard Brindal ; so, after she had prevailed upon the fire to light, hung her cloak and bonnet before it, and turned herself slowly round and round, for the space of a quarter of an hour, so as to give her nether garments the benefit of its impartial influence, she ventured to sit down, and drawing her chair close to Mary's, and pulling out her apron tightly at each side (as laundresses draw out pocket handkerchiefs) while she spoke, she thus opened her mission.

"Mary dear, what's this I hear about your going to marry Richard Brindal?"

Mary raised her eyes, and fixed them steadily upon her companion, as she answered calmly, and coldly—

"Mrs. Stokes, you have been very kind to me—even kind when all others became the reverse—and that is a thing not to be forgotten ; yet I know not that even that miracle authorises you to insult me with such a question."

"Well, well, love," replied Mrs. Stokes, soothingly, as she drew Lord De Clifford's letter out of her pocket ; "do n't be angry, for you see greater folks than I have heerd on it ; for here's a letter from my lord his self, who makes very handsome offers in case you should marry Richard, and so does the old lady too."

If Mary could grow paler, she did, as she convulsively seized the letter, and ran her eye wildly over its contents—

"Monster ! cold-blooded wretch !" she exclaimed, clenching her hand when she had read it—"all your plots shall not succeed ; the poor lowborn serf, the outcast, the insignificant maniac whom you would make still madder, may still be too much for you."

Lee, who had been looking over a file of old bills at a walnut-tree bureau, now took off his spectacles, and laying them upon the top of it, walked over to his daughter, and placing his arm round her waist, kindly drew her towards him.

"How now, Mary," said he, in a voice of assumed cheerfulness, "I should have thought you had too much sense to be ruffled by a paltry electioneering trick, and that letter is nothing more ; as we cannot give the writer his deserts, suppose we treat *it* as it deserves, and put it into the fire."

"No, no," said Mary, "grasping the letter tightly, and holding it over her shoulder, let birds of a feather go together ; there are more of the same, and with them it shall remain ; see if they won't make a precipice yet." And here she gave one of those shrill idiotic laughs, which echoed like a knell in the poor old man's heart ; the more so, that it was a long time since he had seen or heard her so excited. The word precipice recalled the incantation scene vividly to Mrs. Stokes's recollection, and covering her face with her hands, she exclaimed with a shudder, "The Lord be good

to us !” and then added, with that indescribable want of tact peculiar to vulgar minds, “well, give me back the letter, do, there’s a dear.” Mary’s only reply to this appeal was to turn full upon Mrs. Stokes one of those vacant petrifying looks, which were often assumed to gain her point, and which, from filling all beholders with indescribable terror, never failed to do so. “Well, well,” said Mrs. Stokes, in answer to it, “keep the letter, dear, or anything else you like.” Mary’s head sank quietly on her father’s shoulder, while he held his hand over his eyes to hide the tears that were trickling down his withered cheeks. Mrs. Stokes felt a sort of choking in the throat, and rose to open the wine she had brought for Mary, and begged her to drink it. Mary looked up for a moment, and shaking her head, said “No, no, it’s blood-red, give it to Madge.”

“Who wants Madge?” said the latter, entering with the supper things, followed by Datchet bearing a large tureen full of stewed game, the gift of Richard Brindal, of which his sister had before made mention.

“Why, we all want you,” said Lee, assuming a cheerful tone, to try and divert Mary’s attention, and turn the current of her thoughts—“we all want you, if you bring us anything to eat; for I do n t know how the captain there feels, but I begin to think that a seven hours’ fast gives us an appetite.”

“And I,” cried Datchet, placing the tureen upon the table, where Madge had by this time laid the cloth, “feel wonderfully inclined to have a battue among this fine preserve of pheasants, which, in their present state, are fit for a king, and still fitter for a captain. Ladies all, here’s to you,” added he, seating himself at the table, and filling out a glass of Mrs. Stokes’s wine, which he drank off without waiting to see what the contents of the bottle might be.

“Well, now,” cried Mrs. Stokes, who declined eating, but sat by the fire, her head turned towards the supper-table, her legs crossed, her gown turned up, and her right hand gracefully placed, like a slice of ham in a sandwich, between the knee of her right and the under part of her left leg—“well, now, Mary, I shall be quite hurt if you do n’t take a glass of wine too, for it was for you I brought it; not but what the captain (as I hope he knows) is welcome to the best wine in our house, nobody more so, and I hope he’ll soon come and make good my words; but Mary wants it, poor thing!”

“It’s not the first, and I hope it won’t be the last time, that I’ve drunk your health, Mary,” said Datchet, “and so you must not, for once, refuse to drink mine.”

Mary took the proffered wine, more to avoid Mr. Stokes’s petting persecutions than from any other motive; and having consented to eat, in order to please her father, Datchet, whose inebriety seemed

to decrease as his appetite increased, began to talk for ten and eat for six.

“Very respectable wine that of yours, Mrs. Stokes,” said he, as he drained the bottle, pushed away his plate, and leant back in his chair to pause from his exertions—“very respectable, but I could give you something that would astonish you all, if I could get any one to go as far as the abbey — I mean any one we know — any one that’s to be trusted.”

“Lor, captain,” cried Mrs. Stokes, with a shudder, “I do n’t suppose as you’d get any one to go for love or money; for they do say as ghostesses and spirits walk there, pertickler these dark, dismal, winter nights.”

“Spirits walk there, do they?” says Datchet, with a wink at Madge, “ha! ha! ha! bless you, it’s only the habit they have of *doing* the Excise, and they only walk to show that they are not *run*. By-the-bye, that reminds me of a lot of tobacco that came into my possession for you, Master Lee, and here’s some of it,” said he, removing from his pockets, as he spoke, two large packets, and placing them before Lee.

“This is very fine by the smell,” said Lee, “and must have been brought from a great distance?”

“Only from Falmouth, sir, only from Falmouth;” and Datchet drew another chair, upon which he placed his feet, and leaning back in the one in which he sat, re-lit his pipe, and puffed away consequentially.

“I had no idea it was so easily to be had,” replied Lee.

“Not easy to be had? pu, pu, puff — nearly lost me my life getting it.”

“Dear me, that was no joke.”

“Wrong again—pu, pu, puff—it was all a joke.”

“Ah, I recollect you said you got it from some Americans, and promised to tell me the story.”

“Pu, pu, puff—so I will, as soon as this pipe’s aground; here, Madge, my girl, handing her a flask of brandy out of his most prolific pocket, that wine’s most confoundedly strong, mix me a glass of grog to take off the effects of it — not too much cold water, though; pu, pu, puff—cholera going—cold water—pu, pu, puff—very dangerous.”

“I can’t a bear it at any time,” interposed Mrs. Stokes.

“Well, sir, you must know,” said Datchet, emptying the ashes out of his pipe on the table, and returning it to his waistcoat pocket, “when I was at Marseilles a short time ago, I fell in with an American chap who had just landed from a Chinaman, and hearing I should soon be in England, he asked me to take charge of some slips and seeds of the *outom-chu*, which you must know is a Chinese tree, very like our sycamore, only the leaves are between eight

and nine inches in diameter, fastened to a stalk about a foot long, which is so tufted and laden with flowers, that not a single ray of the sun can squeeze through 'em ; and for all the leaves and blossoms are so big, the fruit is so extraordinary small that it is not much bigger than a pea ; so that, altogether, you see it's a curiosity, and would stand alone but for the Reform Bill, which resembles it, inasmuch as that its flourishing and flowery promises have produced very small fruits. But to go back to the Yankee chap who I left standing on the quay at Marseilles—he gives me a packet of *outom-chu* — slips and seeds — directed to 'The Honourable Cæsar Lycurgus Rantandcant, New York, care of Captain Milton Scroggins, of the Mohawk, Lion Hotel, Falmouth,' as he wanted to cross over to Civitavecchia (I suppose to ascertain Gasperani's notions of liberty) before he returned to America. The parcel not being over large, I took it ; and when I got to Falmouth, finding the Mohawk was in port, and not to sail till the next day, I thought I might as well go aboard, and see what sort of vessel she was ; so stowing the Honourable Cæsar Lycurgus Rantandcant away in my hat, I pushed off for the Mohawk.

“When I came alongside, I saw the captain's gig laden with luggage, and a sallow-looking gentleman, with a very long nose and a back to match, standing on the edge of the boat, and giving particular directions about a writing-desk which he was handing up to the mate of the Mohawk. Presently a little man in the boat, with a black coat, cocked hat, very dirty shirt, and a large diamond pin, who turned out to be the first lieutenant of the Mohawk, cried out to the sallow-looking chap, ‘I guess you'd be a tarnation deal more convenient on shore till the vessel sails.’

“Whether it was that, after such an extra allowance of nose, he had been put upon short commons with regard to ears, or that they were stowed away in the writing-desk the mate had just taken on board, I don't know, but Yellow-hammer took no more notice of the first lieutenant than if he had been a tailor asking for his bill.

“‘I calculate you're considerable in the way there,’ repeated the first lieutenant, this time impressing the observation on him by a gentle push, which, however, sent poor Mustard-face clean into the sea ; but all hands instantly coming to his assistance, we soon handed him up again, his head not even having time to get under water. As soon as he had recovered himself sufficiently to speak, and smoothed down his face with a wet pocket-handkerchief, he rose majestically like a spring-tide, and looking resolutely at the first lieutenant, said, without moving a muscle of his face, ‘Sir, I shall report you to the admiral.’

“‘What need of reporting me to the admiral—I can give ee satisfaction, can't I?’

“‘Sir,’ said the damp gentleman, ‘I am a clergyman.’

“Well, what o’ that : we’ve got one of your cloth on board, and he can satisfy ee, can’t ee, without ee troubling the admiral?”

“To this the long gentleman made no answer, but throwing a contemptuous look at the first lieutenant, clambered up the ship’s ladder; and I followed his example. As soon as I had set my foot on deck, I requested to be shown down into Captain Milton Scroggins’s cabin, which was accordingly done. I had no sooner entered, than a little Yankee cur darted off the sofa, and began barking at me through his nose, which caused Captain Milton Scroggins—a short, thick-set, dark-coloured man, in whose face the small-pox had been playing at cribbage, and who was sitting with his feet on the table, reading the *Examiner*, a glass of grog on one side of him, and a spittoon on the other—to raise his head and say, ‘What may your pleasure be?’

“I placed my packet of seeds and slips before him, telling him how it had come into my possession at Marseilles, with a request that I would deliver it safely.

“‘Oh, much obliged to ee, but I’m sure, as I always say, I find all Europe-yans (Europe-ans) partickler obliging and conformable. Sorry I sail to-morrow, but next time I come to Falmouth, hope to see ee on board the Mohawk. Shall spare no expense to entertain ee—perhaps a little tobacco may be agreeable to ee? Got some uncommon fine Latakai—cost me forty-five of the best Baltimore for a dozen pounds of it; be glad to give ee some for ee trouble in bringing me the Outom-chu seeds.’

“I thanked him, and it being one of my maxims to take everything but three things, which I never do if I can avoid it—cold, trouble, and advice—I accepted his offer. While he was selecting a packet for me off an adjoining table on which there were several, down came the first lieutenant.

“‘Please, captain, Mr. Trevyllian is come aboard. I told him we didn’t sail till to-morrow, but he says he prefers embarking to-day.’

“‘Well, let his luggage be stowed away,’ replied the captain.

“‘Luggage!’ repeated the first lieutenant, ‘he’s tarnation little troubled with that. Why, he’s brought nothing aboard but his pipe, his wife, and a pair of slippers; or rather, he’s brought his wife, and she’s brought his pipe and slippers, for she’s carrying both.’

“‘Ah, that’s the way with all your great geniuses,’ said the captain, ‘they’re always a doing things out of the common, and unlike other people; wonderful man Mr. Trevyllian, they say he bangs Byron at conjugalties and catastrophes. You know him, perhaps, sir?’

“‘Never heard of him,’ said I.

“‘Never heard of him! well, that’s queer, too. I thought every

Europe-yan at least had heard of him—all the Europe-yan ladies, 'specially the English, are mad after him — no wonder he has had seven wives, and they say killed—that is, *murdered*—for there is a difference between killing and murdering,—the former being a sort of cowardly anonymous way that many men put an end to their wives: but he openly and honourably murdered five of his; but I never believe half what I hear.'

" 'Nor I neither,' said I,—'so I dare say that it was only two and a half! But, even at that rate, he must still have an extra wife,—a Sunday and an every-day one like. Pray, sir, is he famous for nothing else?—for that's by no means so uncommon.'

" 'Yes, he writes books,—he wrote a novel called the Unnatural Son, which being full of terrible things was naturally much admired.' "

" 'Bless me! what a orrid villain,' interrupted Mrs. Stokes; 'murder five wives! and why was n't he hanged five times for it at Newgate, pray?'

" 'Why, my dear, he was a gentleman and a genius, and they may do anything; it is only common people that are deprived of murder, with many other luxuries,' said Datchet.

" 'And more shame for them as deprives 'em,' exclaimed Mrs. Stokes, tying on her bonnet vehemently.

" 'Well, to go on with my story,' continued Datchet, 'while we were still talking, who should come in but Mr. Trevyllian himself? I must confess he was a wonderful-looking person—there was a kind of patent self-acting-villain air about him, that gave one the idea of the devil's being a baby to him in wickedness, that was truly surprising and uncommon—his wife (the one at the time being in waiting I mean,) he had, it appears, sent to bed, and he had come to try and effect a transfer with Captain Milton Scroggins, for some cypress wine he had lying in the docks, in exchange for some of the captain's much-vaunted tobacco.

" 'Scroggins expressed himself but too proud to have it in his power to oblige so great a man, and then glancing at a pair of large yellow embroidered Turkish slippers that the new-comer wore, added, 'You must be cruel easy, sir, I calculate, in those outlandish shufflers—pity they're not in parliament, they'd bring forred such a capital motion on the corn laws.'

" 'At this, Captain Milton Scroggins and the great man laughed together for five minutes, and then the latter added, 'Yes, and, like most of the motions in that house, it would be all 'leather and prunella.' This rose Mr. Trevyllian in my opinion, because, though he was what Mr. Liston calls a bigamarian, it convinced me that in other matters he was not above speaking the truth. This induced me to cast an eye over him, and seeing my attention fixed upon a dagger he wore in his belt, he very civilly drew it out,

telling me that it was poisoned with a poison subtle enough to retain its deadly qualities for a thousand years, and powerful enough to depopulate the world, if the inhabitants were only inoculated with it—that it had been given to him as a parting gift by a Bedouin chief, to whom he had paid a visit in the desert of some months. I took the weapon—to my eyes it had a most Blue-beardish appearance; in stretching my hand across the table for it, the two packets of tobacco which the captain had given me began to steer towards the door, and putting out my hand suddenly to stop them, the dagger fell, and the point of it coming against my wrist, grazed the skin, but fortunately did not draw the blood.”

“ Luckily, indeed ! ” said Madge, turning very pale, “ for, being poisoned, it would have killed you.”

“ And had he been a *ooman*, I ’ve no doubt but it would,” interposed Mrs. Stokes; “ but the wicked monster of a thing knew that it was neither *ooman* or wife, and *hit*’s evident to me that ’s what *hit* had been used to.”

“ I hope, though,” said Lee, “ you did not feel the worse after it; for even that slight scratch might have been dangerous.”

“ Why, to tell you the truth,” resumed Datchet, “ I did feel an unpleasant burning and throbbing all up my arm for more than a week after, though the ship’s surgeon soon set me to rights; after which I began to think that I had had enough of Captain Milton Scroggins, the amateur grand Turk, and, above all, his poisoned dagger—so wishing them both a good voyage, I took my leave and went on shore, and, two days after the Mohawk had sailed, I had the inexpressible sorrow and surprise to find, that instead of the two packets of tobacco Scroggins had presented me with, six had in some mysterious and unaccountable manner found their way into my pocket; but on reflection I attributed this apparent miracle to the omnipotent agency of that wonderful American invention, entitled concentrated essence of the sublimated spirit of steam, of which a person has only to put a small phial in his pocket, and it will carry him on at the rate of fifty miles an hour; so I concluded that a little of this precious essence must have been among the packets of Latakai on board the Mohawk, and so impelled them into my pocket, where, meeting with no more of the sublimated spirit, they remained for want of further impetus ! ”

“ O captain, captain,” said Lee with a half smile, as he shook his head, “ it was too bad to steal the poor man’s tobacco after his kindly giving you some.”

“ Steal ! ” said Datchet, laughing as he rose from his chair and buttoned his coat, “ no, no, massa, as the niggers say, I no steal him,—Sambo scorn steal, I *only take* him—but come, it ’s time to be going—so good-bye, Master Lee; I shall see you again before I go, but I ’m off again in a few days.”

“Again!” repeated Madge with a sigh, and in a tone of inquiry, to which, however, Datchet paid no attention; but turning to Mrs. Stokes, who had finished all her preparations for departure, even to putting on her pattens, said, “You must let me convey you home, Mrs. Stokes, for you are much too young and too pretty (gazing with mock admiration on her fat bloated face now glowing like a kitchen-fire) to walk by yourself at this time of night, even through the quiet village of Blichingly.”

“Lor! captain,” simpered Mrs. Stokes, “if you ain’t jist the same as *hever* you was.”

“Now that’s exactly what I think of you,” replied Datchet; “that you ’re just the same that you ever were, not a day older than when I first knew you, ten years ago; but though I am surrounded by youth and beauty,” continued he, bowing gallantly, first to Mrs. Stokes (who was fluttering beneath his compliments like a parrot in the sun), and then to Mary and Madge, “I *must* not forget my old friends: how is Miss Mac Screw? does she still live in Lavender-lane?”

“Yes, sure,” said Mrs. Stokes, “and finds it as difficult as ever to buy pepper and salt, and such like rarities, with two hundred thousand pounds! only that she never keeps a shilling by her, but has it all locked up in them ere debentures and things—I declare I ’d break into the house myself; but I hope, as you’ve got another *goold* box for her, captain—ha! ha! ha! that was the best day’s work as you *hever* did. But only think, there’s Parson Hoskins after her; he as cast the *hold* lady up at the Park in the lawsuit about the tithes, and he’s laid a *himmense* bet with his cousin, Mr. Tymmons the ’torney, who pretends to the *hold* lady that he won’t see Hoskins after his conduct to her, but he does though on the sly. Well, *he’ve* laid a *himmense* bet, somethink quite *tremenjus* with him, that he’ll get Miss Mac Screw to marry him, but I do n’t think as he will, for all he’s so ’cute, for she’ve refused dozens of sightlier men nor him, ’cause she knows as it’s *honly* her money they wants.”

“Well done, parson!” laughed Datchet,—“a virtuous woman is a crown to her husband, as Solomon says; and as no one can have any doubt of Miss Mac Screw’s virtue—defended, as it has ever been, by her face—she will be a great many crowns to her husband, if she can be prevailed upon to bestow the enviable title upon Hoskins. And as for her heart, I’ve no doubt, being perfectly orthodox, he’d be content with the tithe—ha! ha! ha! Hang me if I do n’t go and see the bride elect to-morrow. Well, good-night to you again, my fine fellow,” added he, stretching out his hand to Lee; and then shaking Mary’s more gently, he turned to Madge and Mrs. Stokes, offering each of them an arm, and saying that he would first deposit Mrs. Stokes safely at her

own house, and then walk to the abbey with Madge. When the trio left the cottage, every trace of the late storm had passed away—all around was “calm as a child’s repose”—the air was singularly fresh and fragrant, while the whole landscape was flooded with the light of the clear cold moon, which was riding high in the heavens, shining out like hope laden with happy morrows—that never come!

CHAPTER XVI.

She is none of your dainty dames, who love to appear in a variety of suits, every day new; as if a good gown, like a stratagem in war, were to be used but once.—FULLER.

Win her with gifts—if she respect not words;
Dumb jewels often, in their silent kind,
More than quick words, do move a woman’s mind.

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

I have a penny to spend,
I’m beholden to nobody,
I’ll neither borrow nor lend.—BURNS.

DEAR reader, if it be not giving you too much trouble to rise at eight in the morning, pray walk with me as far as Lavender-lane, and allow me to introduce you to Miss Mac Screw. Did the dirt and deficiencies of her ménage arise from poverty, I should fear to disgust your too delicate sensibility; but as they only arise from the little amiable eccentricities of a millionaire, they may create a smile. Miss Lavinia Mac Screw was of Irish extraction, and of a tolerable family; the only surviving branches of which (beside herself) consisted of a mother, who, had she been poor, would have been called mad; but being rich, was only thought odd: and three brothers, a rich elder one, who had married an heiress; and two younger ones, possessed of no more of this world’s dross than a half-pay company and majority in two marching regiments supplied. In her secret soul, Miss Lavinia Mac Screw had decided upon making her rich elder brother her heir and residuary legatee; but with a sisterly affection, which the dowager Lady De Clifford would have said “did great credit to her head and *hort*,” she had apportioned ten pounds to each of her younger ones to buy mourning-rings. The fair Lavinia’s penetration was as keen as her appetite. Well did she analyse the motives for which she was courted by all; and doubly did she enjoy the dinners she ate at her neighbours’ expense, from the reflection that she should not even pay *legacy-duty* for them! In the formation of her person, nature had been as economical as she herself was in its decoration. She was short and exceedingly thin, with feet and hands that might have belonged to a giantess. Her eyes were black, small, round, and restless; her nose long and

spiky; her mouth wide, but well filled with long yellow teeth; her voice was short and sharp, as if it was eternally straining to keep in a well-muzzled brogue. Words were the only things she was extravagant in, as she generally repeated her last sentence twice over, shuffling about all the time on the edge of her seat, and suddenly hopping from one chair to another as a bird does from twig to twig. Her dress baffles description, unless, reader, thou canst, by a stretch of imagination, fancy a very lanky and ill-filled rag-bag, suddenly endowed with locomotive powers, lilting a sprightly measure to the tune of "The Light of other Days."

In the house or out of the house, her morning head-gear, summer and winter, was an old Leghorn bonnet, with a very large high flat crown, resembling a souffle dish—the leaf exceedingly small in proportion, though enlarged by a binding of broad green thrice-washed sarcenet ribbon, with strings to correspond; and three large black holyoaks, composed of feathers, bobbing in the front, like young hearse-plumes. But as she generally contrived to dine out every day, she always (what she called) dressed for dinner,—that is, put on a pink or yellow leno dress, while a silk pocket-handkerchief twisted tight round her head officiated as a turban, without interfering with two large and very dusty bunches of short black false ringlets, that appeared to be playing at hide and seek all over her forehead; and which, with a string of blue, yellow, or green glass beads tight round her throat, and a pair of brown cotton Berlin gloves, and nankin shoes, with a rainbow scarf of coloured worsteds in cold weather, completed her evening toilet; unless on very grand occasions indeed, such as an assize ball, or the christening of one of Mrs. Tymmons's children, and then the black feather holyoaks were transplanted from the Leghorn bonnet to the pocket-handkerchief turban, so that they were about as well known through the county as the tax-gatherer; for Miss Mac Screw made a point of attending every sort of *réunion* where anything in the shape of eating and drinking was to be had, from the harmless tea and attenuated bread and butter of the county balls, to the strong geese and strong ale of a harvest home. The expense of carriage-hire would, indeed, have been an insurmountable barrier to these amusements, had not every one in the neighbourhood always been ready to take "dear Miss Mac Screw anywhere; and the Tymmonses kept a fly, (a green one,) and the Moggses kept a fly, (a yellow one,) and the Simmonses kept a carriage, (a Waterloo-blue one, picked out with red,) and the Bumpasses kept a coach; and not one of these amiable families but had an Emma, or a Charlotte, or a Georgy, ever ready to stay at home, so as to make room for dear Miss Mac Screw; or a Tom, or a Bob, or a Dick, equally ready to go on the box, or walk, even on such nights as none save the witches in Macbeth would care to encounter.

The worst of it was, that although the Simmonses' carriage was by far the most comfortable, yet the Simmonses and the Tymmonses were at daggers-drawn,—being rivals in everything except equipages, where, of course, the carriage drove the fly out of the field. The eldest Miss Tymmons had red hair, but then she played all Strauss's waltzes and galopes better than Strauss himself (at least so her mother said). Well, what of that? Miss Simmons had an equivalent cast in her very verdant eyes, and rivalled Herz, Doepler, and Thalberg combined, as a pianiste;—here then was equality again. But then, Mr. Rush Tymmons wrote poetry—went without a neckcloth—wore his shirt-collar horizontally—looked as if he committed great excesses in toast and water—and, in short, was the Byron of Blichingly. Then, again, Mr. Sam Simmons had written *such* an article in the Ladies' Magazine, upon tight lacing, pathology, and green tea, that he was considered to beat him hollow in science and profundity. Mr. Tymmons, senior, was awfully vulgar; ditto Mr. Simmons, senior, and Mrs. S. was unconcealably ashamed of him; ditto Mrs. T. of Mr. T. But the younger branches of the family were so very "*genteel*!" that there was nothing like them,—except it might be the younger branches of the Simmonses, and they would rather have been like nothing than like the Tymmonses. Next clashed their love of aristocratic acquaintances, which was not only their glory in particular, but like glory in general, inasmuch as it was

“Like a circle in the water,
Which never ceaseth to enlarge itself
Till by broad spreading it disperse to nought.”

Mr. Tymmons being a radical, Lord De Clifford and his mother used to honour him with their company at dinner once during every election, on which memorable occasions, a man cook, waiters, lamps, and champagne-glasses, were always hired from Triverton. While, on the other hand, Mr. Simmons being a Tory, was, with his wife and seven daughters, during these elective periods of national independence and discrimination, always invited by Lady Sudbury to her tableaux at Campfield—the last of which had been from the Vicar of Wakefield, representing neighbour Flamborough's family picture, wherein the seven Miss Simmonses represented the seven Miss Flamboroughts with seven oranges in their hands, and produced such a sensation, that two duchesses, three marchionesses, four countesses, one royal duke, eight Lord Johns and Lord Williams, and four-and-twenty bran-new-baronets laughed themselves into hysterics. This was not to be borne; and accordingly Mr. Rush Tymmons, after sitting up all night and quaffing two draughts of Moxon's effervescing magnesia, produced the following (what he called) smashing epigram, and inserted it

anonymously in the "Triverton Independent,"—headed by the following little *affiche*

"ON THE LATE BUFFOONERY AT CAMPFIELD.

"O, what must the Tories, Miss Simmonses, feel,
To see you so roughly can handle their *Peel*?
Every hope of success from their faction must fade,
When all they can get is such *poor Orange aid*!"

This brilliant and razor-like piece of satire was rewarded by Mr. Rush's paternal perpetrator with a 5*l.* note! and by his justly proud mother with a very elegant double-gilt chain: but the injured Simmonses, the victims of this Cassius-like attack—which had made such a noise in the printing-office of the Triverton Independent, and in their own breakfast-room, never dreamt—never suspected—never imagined, for a moment, the hated quarter from whence it had emanated—for they met the Tymmonses as usual at church or elsewhere—with the same zero bows and curtseys as ever—and the Waterloo-blue coach never passed the green fly without their respective occupants smiling prussic acid at each other.

Now Miss Mac Screw was too much a woman of the world ever to care more for one person than another, let her have received what kindness she might from them, socially or politically; she had no idea of the corrupt system of assisting anybody. "*Sibi quemque cavere oportet*," was her motto. Nevertheless, with all this world of impartiality to range through, which her El Dorado in the Three per Cents enabled her to do without offending any one—yet she was sometimes puzzled when circumstances compelled her to exert her *congé d'élire*; for if the Simmonses took her twice running to some tea-party where the Tymmonses were not going, she invariably found that she had a dinner the less that week at the Tymmonses, or *vice versa*; then, on the other hand, there was more in the long run to be got out of the Simmonses, for they remained at Blichingly all the year round, whereas the Tymmonses regularly went every year six weeks to Margate, and empty houses give no dinners; but then, to be sure, their cousin the Reverend Nathaniel Peter Hoskins, sent her regular supplies of poultry, game, fish, and vegetables, and consequently they were not to be offended, though, as she observed in confidence to Mrs. Simmons, such presents were very expensive, as they entailed upon one the necessity of a fire to dress them; for which reason, as soon as she received them, she generally sent them down to Mrs. Simmons with "her compliments, and that if they dined at home she would herself look in at five o'clock!" which was always answered with, "they should be delighted to see Miss Mac Screw at five precisely, or at one to luncheon, if she was not better engaged." Now the Reverend Nathaniel Peter Hoskins thought, by a parity of reason—

ing, that as Miss Mac Screw never rejected his presents, she could not possibly reject himself; but his conclusions were drawn from false premises—for she not only refused him, but, upon his proposing for her a third time, forbade him her house, or even to make his appearance in Lavender-lane; to which he replied, with chivalric gallantry, that his heart should be laid up in lavender for her, till her cruelty relented sufficiently to accept it. How could she refuse him, “for, take him for all in all, she ne’er would look upon his like again!” His face was a dark copper colour, very long and very square; his hair grizzled, short, and rampant, like a scrubbing-brush that “had done its duty, and had done no more;” his eyes were coffee-coloured and dancing, with butter-cup whites to them; his nose was short, straight, and very thick; his upper-lip very long, and his under one fashioned after the model of a pap-boat; his teeth long, yellow, and so projecting that his lips had a sinecure, for they could never meet to transact business, which gave his face the appearance of an eternal grin, even when preaching and discussing the most serious subjects; his figure was colossal, and very high-shouldered, and his limbs were so loosely and jerkily hung, that he gave one the idea of being composed of stray legs and arms: the evolution of bowing he always performed by butting his head forward like a ram, while his body writhed, wriggled, and lashed about like an eel. Such was the man that Miss Mac Screw had had the self-denial to refuse; but peace, alas! is not even for the prudent, nor ease for the economical! Another attack upon her purse had been recently made by Mr. Herbert Grimstone, through the medium of Mr. Tymmons, to try and borrow two thousand pounds at any per centage, and with every security from her, as it would not do to borrow it from his mother, whom he assured he was brought in free; and without it he could not, at the next election, stand.

Now, though Miss Mac Screw professed great reluctance to lend money on any terms, yet, from the amplitude of the security Mr. Tymmons advanced on the part of Lord De Clifford, she was on the point of acceding, when an urgent letter from Major Nonplus, written in the plenitude of his friendly zeal to back his friend Herbert’s request, contained such a dismal and forcible statement of that gentleman’s ruined fortune and baseless prospects, as at once deterred Miss Mac Screw from stirring another step in the business, beyond going back every step she had previously advanced. It was this unexpected and appalling contretemps that had induced Mr. Herbert Grimstone to write to Marseilles, and despatch Captain Datchet (whom he had long known in his diplomatic capacity to be an excellent secret agent) to Blichingly, to lead the forlorn hope of another attack upon Miss Mac Screw’s purse. Accordingly, the morning after his arrival at Lee’s cottage saw Captain Datchet,

at eight o'clock, on his way to Lavender-lane—not in his rough sailor's costume of the evening before, but in a handsome surtout, lined with fur, French-polished boots, unexceptionable hat and gloves, and his hair flowing gracefully, according to the present fashion, over his ears.

Miss Mac Screw's mansion in Lavender-lane was a yellow brick, two-windowed, three-storeyed house, the parlour windows of which were defended from the intrusive gaze of street passengers by deep yellow leno blinds, drawn upon white tape, and fastened with tin tacks to each side of the window-frame. Being the first house on the left-hand side of the lane, it had only a right-hand neighbour, which consisted of a small mineral and vegetable emporium, alias a coal-shed, where potatoes, turnips, carrots, oysters, and red-herrings were also sold; next to this was a small public-house, the Magpie and Spoon; next to this again was a still smaller house, with a slate-coloured board between the first-floor windows, in which large yellow letters proclaimed that within was "Miss Grubb's Seminary for Young Ladies." One more house was next to this, with a worsted stocking thrust through a broken pane of one of the windows on the ground-floor, while the model of a man-of-war for sale graced the other; and two announcements over the door, of "Mangling done here," and "Matthew Square *teches reeding, riting, and rethmetic* above," completed the row on this side of the street, while those on the opposite side were still unfinished, except one small one, whose lower windows were gracefully festooned with sausages, and the profiles of several pigs, with the torsos of others; the corner house, next to "the Swinish Multitude," presented a few old phials, and an assurance that the highest price was there given for rags of every description, and which was most likely Miss Mac Screw's inducement for fixing her abode immediately opposite. The clock of a neighbouring church was striking eight as Miles Datchet tugged at the stiff black knocker of Miss Mac Screw's door, till he achieved something like a postman's knock with a postscript to it, being three distinct thumps, at a respectful distance from each other. No sooner had the last sounded, than a Leghorn bonnet and three black holyoaks was seen peering over the yellow blind of the far window, to ascertain who the intruder could possibly be; while Sally, the red-headed maid, who could, through the legitimate channel of opening the door, have satisfied her curiosity at once, preferred the circuitous one of going into the area and gazing upwards, to the great risk of a very dirty nightcap taking its departure in the north-east wind to the opposite rag-shop. Even the lady of the coal-shed kept a dustman full two minutes longer than she need have done, opening some oysters that she had selected for his morning's repast, while she took a "lingering look" at Miss Mac Screw's smart visiter.

One of the windows of Miss Grubb's "Seminary" was also thrown up, and three heads precipitately appeared, one bob-major with a high-backed comb and long ringlets, which was the head of the school, Miss Grubb herself; the other two were small editions of Monk Lewis's *Tails of Wonder*, for their length was really surprising: these were two of the "young ladies." In short, the whole street was thrown into commotion by such a visiter at such an hour, and not a countenance but expressed the most intense curiosity and wonder, except those of the pigs in the opposite window. Sally at length shuffled up stairs, and opened the door with one hand, while with the other she gathered her clothes about her, lest, like the leaves in autumn, they should fall off. Miss Mac Screw never kept a handmaiden more than two or three weeks, for she gave them four shillings a-week to find themselves; consequently, as she observed, they got too much money, and too little to do, which spoiled them, and compelled her frequently to part with them; therefore Captain Datchet did not know Sally, and Sally did not know him.

"Pray, my pretty girl," said he, when he had crossed the threshold, "is Miss Mac Screw at home?"

"Yes, she is at home," said the girl, deliberately eying him from head to foot; "but I don't know whether I was to say so, though; but wait here, and I'll go and see." So saying, Sally opened the parlour-door on the right-hand side of the passage, and, slamming it after her, left Datchet free to reconnoitre the luxuries around him.

There was neither oil-cloth on the hall nor carpets on the stairs, and the boards, which were very dirty, had a fine gravelly feel beneath the feet; the staircase window was open, a flower-pot was outside it with a withered shrub in it, covered with soot, that looked like a birch-rod in mourning; a piece of whipcord ran across the window, from which were suspended two cotton pocket-handkerchiefs, and three pair of cotton stockings of Miss Mac Screw's, bearing very bilious symptoms of the lavatorial skill of Sally. The house itself had a fine zoological smell of live mice. Miss Mac Screw did not keep a cat, "they were such horrid thieves!" And to judge from the shoals of dead wasps and flies in the window-seat, and the rich draperies of cobwebs that hung from the walls, it might be presumed that Miss Mac Screw was much addicted to the interesting study of entomology,—at least Captain Datchet had just come to this conclusion when the parlour-door opened, and Sally, stepping out, said, "Your name, please?"

The being followed by Miss Mac Screw, who kept peering through the aperture of the door which Sally held ajar, and who at that moment recognised him, saved him the trouble of answering by popping forward, and saying, "Bless me, Captain Datchet,

is that you?—thought you were abroad—thought you were abroad. Come in, won't you?—going to breakfast—going to breakfast. You've breakfasted, of course. Not proper to ask a gentleman to breakfast *tête-à-tête*, you know—*tête-à-tête*,—ha! ha! ha!"

Datchet took the hint from the emphasis on the *of course*, and said he had breakfasted; and even had he not, there was no temptation for him to do so here. In a very small, narrow, rusty, iron grate, in which there was a little, low, consumptive fire, that looked like a young lady of eighteen, in as much as it was just beginning to go out, was a small tin shaving-pot with hot water, and which had actually the conceit to attempt the part of a kettle. On a small table near the fire-place was spread an equally arrogant newspaper, that emulated a table-cloth! On this were placed a cracked blue tea-cup and saucer, a pewter spoon, a small black tea-pot, some brown sugar on a small plate, a little milk in a pot-matum pot, and a little tea in a broken tumbler: this, with the very stale-looking half of a penny roll, and a very small piece of salt butter, completed the bill of fare of Miss Mac Screw's breakfast.

"You'll excuse my beginning my breakfast, I'm sure," said she, "and we can talk all the same."

"O certainly," said Datchet; "I have only a few presents from a young gentleman to give you, which will keep till after breakfast."

"Presents to give me! and from a young gentleman! How very odd—very odd—he! he! he!" and Miss Mac Screw's eyes danced and twinkled like stars with the light left out. She held the one spoonful of tea she always indulged in, suspended over the tea-pot like the sword of Damocles; and lucky was it that she did so, for by that means there was "one halfpenny worth" of tea saved to her and her heirs for ever; for, before she had time to engulf it in the tea-pot, the door opened, and Sally entered, her apron thrown over her left hand, and so protecting her finger and thumb, which secured a three-cornered note, while her right hand rested gracefully on her right hip.

"Please, ma'am, here's a note from Mrs. Tymmons, and the footboy waits an answer."

Miss Mac Screw replaced the tea in the cracked tumbler, while she opened and read the note, which ran as follows:—

"DEAR MISS MAC SCREW,—If you are not better engaged, will you dine and spend the day with us?—that is, come to luncheon at one.

"Yours very sincerely,

"S. TYMMONS."

"My compliments, and I shall be most happy, most happy—and here, Sally, you may put these things back in the closet; for lunching at one, it is impossible to eat any breakfast, and the Tymmonses would be offended if I did not eat, and I would not offend them for the world, puir people, puir people."

"Certainly, certainly," replied Datchet, for there was not that thing which Miss Mac Screw could have asserted, which at the time being he would not have agreed in; "and breakfasting at eight, it would be quite impossible to eat at one."

"Now, I'm quite at leisure to attend to you,—quite at leisure to attend to you," said Miss Mac Screw, removing herself from three different chairs during the delivery of this short speech.

"I shall not detain you long," said Datchet, taking a small parcel out of his side pocket; "merely a few little keepsakes Mr. Herbert Grimstone begged of me to give you, in case I should happen to pass through Blichingly; and as I had a little business that made a four-and-twenty hours' visit necessary, I would not go without coming to see you." So saying, he handed her the parcel, which she opened eagerly, and which contained the costly offerings of a very shabby black iron Berlin bracelet, a little three-cornered fichu of Venetian beadwork, a shell necklace, and a Turkish tobacco bag for a reticule, but which, as its perfume told, had already done duty in its original capacity. If, however, the chief merit of a present consists in its being adapted to the taste or wants of the person to whom it is given, then were Mr. Herbert Grimstone's *cadeaux* most appropriate, as they consisted in that species of trumpery in which Miss Mac Screw most delighted, especially coming as it did from abroad; for having in her younger days once passed three months at Naples with an old aunt, (who had since left her the chief part of her present wealth,) she always talked vertu, and affected the greatest admiration for anything foreign; and, as may have been seen by the description of the house, had, with that perfect imitation which talent combined with good taste always insures, achieved as dirty a domicile as any of the multitudinous dens in the purlieus of the Chiatamone. Miss Mac Screw's eyes danced and sparkled as she examined the different pieces of trumpery before her, especially the roses and convolvuluses in the bead handkerchief.

"That is Venetian," said Datchet, by way of enhancing its value.

"Ah! very pretty, very pretty indeed," rejoined Miss Mac Screw, seizing and examining the Berlin kitchen-range-looking bracelet, with that Milesian inverse jumble of ideas common to all who have had the good fortune to have sprung from the

"First flower of the earth, and first *jim* of the *say*."

"So plain and elegant! You do n't read, Captain Datchet, poetry and romances, and that sort of thing, so you do n't know what I mean; but you may tell Mr. Grimstone that I shall call it my 'Venetian bracelet,'—he! he! he! L. E. L.'s—Miss Landon's—poor Miss Landon's—L. E. L.'s Venetian bracelet, you know,—or rather you do n't know—but he'll know. All my young friends are very kind in lending me books—lending, you know—lending"

“That bracelet is not Venetian though,” interposed Datchet, anxious to prove that Mr. Herbert Grimstone had not confined himself to one solitary country in procuring testimonies of his reminiscences of Miss MacScrew; “only the necklace and the handkerchief are Venetian, the bracelet is Berlin.”

“O yes, Berlin,” echoed Miss MacScrew, now intently examining the necklace. “Berlin—yes; those are charming carriages—charming carriages, those Berlins they have abroad. But really,” continued she, pushing all her treasures to a little distance from her, and towards Datchet, on the table that was between them, “I do n’t know that I ought to take these things; the *puir* young man is not perhaps aware that I refused to lend him the money, but I make a rule (in the way of money) neither to borrow nor lend—neither to borrow nor lend—he! he! he!—do n’t you think I’m right?”

“Decidedly,” said Datchet, reverentially; “and as you never borrow money, I do n’t see how people can be so unreasonable as to expect you to lend it. But what do you allude to, may I ask?” continued he, with a look tessellated with ignorance and innocence.

“Why, two thousand pounds—two thousand pounds, that Mr. Grimstone wanted to borrow from me.”

“Indeed!” exclaimed Datchet, starting back theatrically in his chair; “may I ask how long ago that was?”

“Oh, about three months ago—three months ago.”

“Then he certainly knew all about it, for it is not one month ago since he gave me those things for you, with so many kind messages. So you see your refusal has not altered his feelings towards you.”

“*Puir* young man! *puir* young man!” blinked Miss MacScrew; “why really, though I make a point of never lending money, I might have lent it to him; but—but ruined as he is, and I with so many brothers depending on me—depending on me—it would be madness—madness.”

“Ruined!” exclaimed Datchet, with well-feigned astonishment, “there, my dear ma’am, you most assuredly mistake; a rising young man like him, with high official appointments, the best government patronage, and to all intents and purposes the heir of Blichingly!” (with great emphasis on the last word, for Miss MacScrew knew the Blichingly rent roll to a doit)—“with all due submission to your better judgment, this is as little like a ruined man as need be.”

“Well, but I thought Lord De Clifford was the heir of Blichingly?” said Miss MacScrew.

“Why, the fact is,” replied Datchet, “they are alternate heirs; the tenure rests chiefly on the old lady’s caprice. She may, you know, leave it to whom she pleases, and the chances fluctuate, her

two sons never being in favour at once; but I should say his lordship's chance was the worst, for, besides having a very good estate of his own, he sees too much of her, and having like herself the devil's own temper—two of a trade, you know, can never agree—and Mr. Herbert is scarcely ever with her, and lays it on thicker when he is, which is all in his favour: but as she must know, after bringing them up as she has done, for all the real love they have for her, if it was not for her money, she might die in a ditch, for the attention they'd pay her."

"Well, but," resumed Miss Mac Screw, unlocking and rummaging in the table drawer for a very large old torn pocket-book, tied round with very dirty tape—"I was told he was ruined by one of his most particular friends—his most particular friends."

"Of course," said Datchet, "when a mischief is to be done, who are ready to go such lengths as one's particular friends? for knowing all about one, they best know the vital points to stick the injury into; but as I live," added he, pointing to old Elwes's pinchbeck box, that lay ensconced in the corner of the drawer, "if there is not my old friend the gold box that you fairly, or rather unfairly, did me out of two years ago. Ah, Miss Mac Screw, I'd give the world if I was as sharp at a bargain as you!"

"Oh! three guineas is a great price—a great price had it been diamonds," screamed Miss Mac Screw, while she still busily pored over the contents of the old pocket-book, which, unlike some other books, had once been *red*. "O here it is," cried she, selecting from the heterogeneous mass of old letters, receipts, and extracts from newspapers, a foreign letter directed in a very scrawling hand, and bearing the impress of a dozen different postmarks—"here it is—letter from Major Nonplus—always endorse my letters—always endorse my letters." So saying, she placed the following document in Datchet's hands.

"Geneva, August 23rd, 180—.

"DEAR MISS MAC SCREW,—Having met with my friend Grimstone at Paris, (on my way here,) who informed me that he had applied to you to raise the wind against the next Triverton election—as I never lose an opportunity of trying to serve a friend, I must write you a few lines to try and spur on your generosity. The fact is, poor fellow! he is devilish hard up. What with gambling, racing, and a few other pastimes that young men are addicted to—and you know what a capricious old Dust the mother is—so he's no great things to expect from that quarter; and as to the peer, I firmly believe he is so hampered himself, that he would not, and could not, even go security for him a single shilling; so you see he has nobody to depend upon but you, to whom we all know money can and ought to be no object, and as he has long been looking out for an heiress, I've no doubt of his repaying you with interest—when he gets one; but as all ladies are '*melting away with open charity*,' as my friend Shakspeare has it, I need not impress upon you his deplorable situation. Should he lose his seat, as my friends the Whigs have not yet carried the abolition of imprisonment for debt, though, when one remembers the vital importance its abolition is of to nearly every member of the present Parliament, it is to be

hoped for their own sakes, if not for the country's at large, that they will (1) carry it, and that they will, I have no doubt, for to repeat a compliment which my friend Sarum (though a terrible Tory) could not help paying them the other day, nothing seems too hot or too heavy for them, as their talents *lie* in everything. Wonderful men—wonderful men certainly. When you see him, pray remember me to your brother—I mean my friend the Major in the 44th—whom I hope one of these days to be congratulating as your heir. When I return to England, Mrs. Nonplus and myself will hope to see you down in Berkshire. Mrs. N. is at present in the Tyrol, or would, I am sure, add her kind regards to those of

“Dear Miss Mac Screw, yours faithfully,

“CHARLES NONPLUS.”

“P. S. Do n't let my friend Grimstone know that I have written to you on this subject, as I should not wish him to think he was under any obligation to me.”

“Ha! ha! ha! then I think you had better let him know it instantly, if that is the Major's object,” said Datchet.

“But by that letter you see he is quite ruined—quite ruined,” shrugged Miss Mac Screw.

“Yes, yes,” laughed Datchet, “I perceive that that letter is quite enough to ruin any man; however,” continued he, “so far from his lordship's not going security for his brother, I have at this moment a letter from him to his man of business in London, Mr. Lyeall, of the firm of Lyeall, Quibble, and Shuffleton, authorising them to give the most ample security to whoever may advance the money, with a guarantee to repay the principal in three years, if required; and as I intend borrowing the money from an elderly lady, a friend of my own, I have Mr. Herbert's orders to pay the first year's interest in advance. I know the lady has as great a dislike as yourself, Miss Mac Screw, to lending money, (and very properly,) but really Mr. Herbert, in the event of his return, intends doing things in such a princely style, that it would be a thousand pities, for the want of such a paltry sum, he should not be returned; and I'm sure all the ladies ought to do all they can for him, for, as he says himself, members make a great fuss about poor-laws, and factories, and municipal reform, and corporations, and their constituents; but they never seem to remember how much those constituents are influenced by the female portion of the community. Why then, as he very justly says, should not their interests, that is, their pleasure and amusement, be more attended to by members who have the honour to represent their husbands, fathers, brothers, sons, uncles, cousins, nephews, brothers-in-law, fathers-in-law, grandsons, and grand-nephews? And what he proposes would be to give a ball every month for the six winter months, and have Gunter from London (all at his own expense) to arrange and provide the supper, while any of the inhabitants of Triverton and its vicinity might send for the fragments the next day.”

(1) The Major was prophetic.

During this harangue, which Datchet uttered with inconceivable rapidity, as though he feared his risible muscles would give way if he paused on a single sentence, Miss Mac Screw had transferred herself to every seat in the room, crossing and re-crossing her legs alternately. At length, when Datchet had finished speaking, and was very diplomatically rising to depart, she repeated—

“Hem, good security, eh!—good security, and principal to be repaid in three years—first year’s interest in advance—a hundred pounds—a hundred pounds—great sum—great sum—did you say ball and supper every month—every month, captain?”

“Yes, I believe that is his intention,” replied Datchet, carelessly moving towards the door, upon the handle of which he now placed his hand, adding, “Well, good morning, ma’am, I fear I shall not have time to look in upon you again before I go”—

“A-hem! hem!—stop a minute, captain—a-hem! may I ask if you are positively engaged to the elderly lady you mentioned, about the money? I—I—mean, *must* you absolutely borrow it from her and no one else?”

“Why,” said Datchet, listlessly, looking up at a cobweb over the door, and removing his right foot into the hall as he spoke, “as I said before, she was at first very reluctant to lend it; but she thinks it a thousand pities that so gallant a young man, who has all the ladies’ welfare so much at heart, should not be returned; so I think she is now anxious to do so; but I am not farther bound to her than having spoken to her on the subject, which is not yet decided, for I am to write by to-night’s post to Messieurs Lyeall, Quibble, and Shuffleton——”

“Well, now really,” said Miss Mac Screw, “I do n’t think you are in the least bound to her; and I—I should like to oblige Mr. Grimstone myself, poor young man; it was so pretty of him sending me those things after I had refused him—refused him the money, you know—the money. And such young men like him, who give balls and suppers, and that sort of thing, ought to be encouraged; better for the county—better for the county, if there were more such in Parliament: so suppose you borrow it from me instead of the other—lady?”

Datchet gave a shake of the head, to which Lord Burleigh’s was nothing, as he replied, in a slow desponding tone of voice—“Why, I do n’t exactly know that I can do that: however,” added he, more briskly, as though he were determined to brave all things to oblige Miss Mac Screw, “I’ll see what can be done, and let you know in a day or two; so good-bye for the present—but, no,” continued he, returning, “to-morrow is foreign post-day, and I must write to Mr. Herbert, telling him that I have got the money; so that if I do it at all, I must close with you now. But, really,

Miss Mac Screw, I am half afraid; for besides having to get rid of the old lady, which may not be so easy, perhaps Mr. Herbert's pride would be hurt at taking it from you, after having refused him once before. Well, it can't be helped—it must be so, I suppose," said he, taking off his gloves and walking to the table, on which he placed them and his hat—"see what scrapes you ladies are always bringing us unfortunate men into!"

"No scrapes at all—no scrapes at all," said Miss Mac Screw, her eyes dancing, and her body popping up and down like the hammers of a piano; "I think you said the first year's interest in advance—first year's interest in advance?"

"I did," said Datchet, taking from his pocket a large well-filled pocket-book.

"Oh! well, perhaps you'll just write a little memorandum for the satisfaction of all parties—of all parties, you know, till I get the proper instrument from Mr. Lyeall;" saying which, Miss Mac Screw opened the table-drawer, to look for the back of a letter for the purpose, but every one was already filled with divers interesting reminiscences. Two very dingy-looking novels were on the mantelpiece; she opened them, in the hope of finding a fly leaf, but, like her ancestors, they "had gone before;" nothing now remained but to go into the passage and scream for Sally, who, when she appeared, was ordered to run down to the De Clifford Arms, and borrow a sheet of paper from Mrs. Stokes. "And here," added Datchet, giving the nymph of the scarlet locks and zoneless waist a sovereign and five shillings—"stop at Jackson the stationer's, and bring me a five-and-twenty shilling stamp."

"Be I to pay all this money for a slip of paper?" asked Sally, her eyes and mouth opening to an equal width.

"You be," replied Datchet, laughing; "so off with you, and do not let the grass grow under your feet."

As soon as Sally was gone, Miss Mac Screw entered into a sprightly conversation with Captain Datchet touching Mr. Herbert Grimstone's matrimonial prospects. "Well, but about this heiress that Major Nonplus mentions; I hope that is not as false as anything else he stated?"

"I really do n't know, but think it more likely to be true than most of the worthy major's statements."

"He! he! he! should like to see Mr. Herbert in love! it would be so funny—so funny. Suppose he'd have to look melancholy, and sigh 'heigh ho!' like any other lover?"

"I've no doubt," said Datchet, laughing, "that if he was making love, particularly to an heiress, he would with truth sigh *I owe!*" but fearing the amiable spinster might detect the latent meaning of his pun, he quickly changed the subject to that strictly

national one, the weather, when Miss Mac Screw, after having echoed all his opinions thereupon for the space of three minutes, suddenly exclaimed, "A-propos de bottes—short accounts make long friends, you know—long friends—and to save time, I'll make out Mr. Herbert's little account to me."

"Mr. Herbert's little account to you!" said Datchet, with unaffected surprise: "why, I was not aware that he owed you anything till he borrows the two thousand pounds."

"Oh, only a few little things—a few little things;" and taking up a small piece of common house-slate, a fragment of which served for a pencil, Miss Mac Screw scratched down the following items, and read them out as she wrote.

"Letter from Mr. Herbert, from Paris, asking for the money, 2s. 8d.

"Letter on Mr. H.'s business—business, you know—that is not betraying that the letter was from Major Nonplus, as he did not wish him to know it, 2s. 11d.

"And as I have no doubt Mrs. Stokes will eventually make me pay for the sheet of paper I have sent for, I'll put paper on Mr. H.'s business, 1d.

"Which just makes it—let me see—

£.	s.	d.
0	2	8
0	2	11
0	0	1
0	5	8

"Five-and-eight-pence exactly!"

This was almost too much for Captain Datchet's gravity. However, with the assistance of his pocket-handkerchief and an artificial fit of sneezing, he was enabled to take out his purse with tolerable gravity, and present Miss Mac Screw with six shillings, adding that he had no halfpence.

"Oh! well, I dare say there will be more sheets of paper wanted before the business is over, and the odd fourpence will do to pay for it, you know—pay for it."

Scarcely had Datchet given his unqualified assent to this provident assertion, before Sally returned, bearing the stamp within the sheet of paper, and the sheet of paper within three inches of white-brown paper, which in its turn was placed within Sally's forefinger and thumb.

"Please, ma'am," panted Sally, "Mrs. Stokes says as how the next time you wants a sheet of paper, you'll find Jackson's the stationer's ten doors nearer nor the De Clifford Arms."

"Have n't I told you," said Miss Mac Screw, snatching the paper out of Sally's hand, "never to bring me any messages, un-

less it is an invitation to dinner or to tea, or anything of that sort, but never from those sort of people? There, that will do, you may go. Now you are sure," continued Miss Mac Screw, turning to Datchet, as soon as Sally had closed the door—"you are sure that the security is unexceptionable?"

"Oh! not better in England, of which Messrs. Lyeall, Quibble, and Shuffleton will clearly satisfy you; and as for the principal, here is a promissory note of Mr. Herbert's, filled up with all but the lender's name, agreeing to repay it in three years if required, for which his brother makes himself responsible."

Miss Mac Screw took the note, turned it, and looked at it in every possible direction, thereby evincing her sagacity; for Mr. Herbert Grimstone was so innately classical, that upon Cicero's authority he adopted the old Roman double and antithetical meaning of the word promise, which was with him, as it had been with them, at one and the same time both *promittere* and *recipere*.

"Well," said she, "apparently satisfied with the examination, 'I'll give you a bill on my bankers, at two months after date—after date, you know—which will be more convenient than after sight.'"

"No comparison," responded Datchet, as Miss Mac Screw, preparatory to the operation, emptied a little water out of the before-mentioned shaving-pot, into a cracked egg-cup, that contained some dried-up ink; and Datchet having mended the old stump, which had once been a pen, Miss Mac Screw proceeded with a trembling hand to fill up the stamp with—

"October 10th, 180—.

"MESSIEURS TUGWELL AND HOLDFAST,—Please to pay to my order, two months after date, to Mr. Herbert Grimstone, or bearer, the sum of two thousand pounds, for value received.

"LAVINIA MAC SCREW.

"To Messrs. Tugwell and Holdfast, bankers,
No. —, Fleet Street, London."

"Now, I'll just keep this till I get Mr. Lyeall's letter. When will that be?" added Miss Mac Screw, carefully locking up the bill.

"Why, if I write by to-day's post, as I shall do," said Datchet, "you will hear from him the day after to-morrow. And now for the first year's interest." Saying which, he counted out five ten pound and ten five pound notes, which he handed to Miss Mac Screw, who got into an additional trepidation, requesting to know if he could not give it to her in fewer notes, for that it was so very, very dangerous walking up High Street with so much money, which she must do, to deposit it in the Blichingly Bank.

"O, yes, I can give you two fifty pound notes instead," said Datchet.

"Thank you—that is much more convenient," said Miss Mac

Screw, untying her Leghorn Golgotha, and carefully pinning the two fifty pound notes in the crown of it with a very large pin, which from long and constant wear shone out in all its brazen glory, and added to the already various decorations of that immortal bonnet.

“Well, once more good-bye, ma’am!” said Datchet, buttoning his coat carefully over his pocket-book, “and remember, if I get into any scrape with Mr. Herbert about taking this money from you, you must bear me harmless.”

“Yes, yes, I’ll bear you harmless,” giggled Miss Mac Screw, nodding her head, which was all the better for the additional hundred pounds she had got in it; “but I’m sure Mr. Herbert is too gallant to be angry with a lady—you know, a lady”——

“Well, I do n’t think there is much chance of his being angry with you, or even me, on the present occasion,” said Datchet, as he walked into the hall to conceal his laughter, which, however, he could not indulge even there, as he was closely followed by Miss Mac Screw, who always officiated as her own porter, and opened the street-door. No sooner had she done so on this eventful morning, than a huge black cat rushed into the hall, carrying a herring in its mouth, which it had just purloined from the neighbouring coal-shed. In its anxiety to cover its retreat, it rushed between Miss Mac Screw’s feet, thereby greatly endangering her equilibrium; but she supported herself against the wall, and with great presence of mind cried out, “Sally—Sally—stop that horrid cat!” Now, luckily for Miss Mac Screw, but unluckily for the cat, Sally was coming up stairs at the time, and did as her mistress desired her, when that lady sprang forward, and forcibly wrested the herring from the cat’s mouth, which she had no sooner done than she let the lawless marauder loose upon society again, by allowing him to pursue his way without further molestation through the staircase window, which when he had done, Miss Mac Screw made over the herring to Sally’s custody, with orders to dress it immediately; “And then, Sally, put it by, for I am exceedingly fond of cold fish—exceedingly fond—and it will do for my luncheon to-morrow—hate cats—they are such horrid thieves—horrid thieves!”

“Humph!” thought Datchet, as he wended his way out of Lavender-lane, and who had been exceedingly amused at the whole scene—“they say one should always hear both sides of the question; and I dare say, if the cat could speak, he would say you were a horrid thief, and I’ve no doubt he would be able to make out his case very clearly.”

CHAPTER XVII.

“Not that the thing was either rich or rare,
They only wonder’d how the d—I it got there.”

“Yes, I have said it—love, madam—life and death lie in your tongue.”—SCHILLER’S *Fiesco*, translated by G. H. N. and J. S.

Who, though they’ve been fierce foes before,
Soon as *the cause* is done and o’er,
Shake hands, and then are foes no more.—OLD LAWYERS.

AFTER Datchet’s departure, Miss Mac Screw had just time to complete a demi-toilette for the day, which consisted of a soft, thick, yet thin muslin dress, which had once been white, with sundry pyramidical flounces, and which “clung round her like a lover,” surmounted by a blue cloth spencer, with a very tight back and equally tight sleeves, when Mrs. and Miss Tymmons drove to the door in the green fly, thinking “it would be pleasanter to *dear* Miss Mac Screw to drive,” or, as they said, “to *ride*, than to walk, as she might have some shopping to do before she came to them.”

“Oh, very lucky, very lucky!” said the fair Lavinia, as she wedged herself in between fat Mrs. Tymmons—“for I want to go to the Bank, not to leave or get any money—not to get any money—but just to ask a question—a question, you know.”

Nature could not have well invented two greater personal contrasts than Miss Mac Screw and Mrs. Tymmons, for the latter rejoiced in a form of infinite rotundity, with a face like a full moon in a scarlet fever, and eyes pale, mild, and full as bottled gooseberries. Mrs. Tymmons had been a blonde, and consequently had subsided into a bay-wig, with little fat round shiny curls, that looked like capillary forced meat balls. Having got into the habit of presenting Mr. Tymmons with an annual miniature of himself, she had acquired the appearance of always being in that interesting situation, even during the three intermediate months; consequently Mr. and Mrs. Tymmons were the happy parents of what, in England, is called “a fine family,”—that is, half a dozen sons and daughters, one uglier than another. Miss Tymmons was, in spite of her *ponceau*-coloured hair, considered by her parents, and indeed by every one in Blichingly except the Simmonses, a very *genteel* (!) girl; for she sat very uprightly on her chair, never had a crease upon any of her clothes, scarcely ever spoke, and never laughed at anything that she heard or read, for fear it should not be proper, and had forbidden her brothers (with whom she was an oracle) to read the Pickwick papers, because, as she said, they were so “very low and ungenteel,” and for her part she could not conceive why people thought them so clever. She had only two brothers at home;—Mr. Rush Tymmons, who, as we have already stated, was all poetry, pensiveness, and peculiarity, being

the genius of the family; Mr. Joseph, on the contrary, being destined to follow his father's calling, was the man of business. In proportion as Mr. Rush was tall and thin, he was fat and short, with nice fat, sleek-looking, dark-brown hair, like the ears of a pointer pup, and a face between a cherubim's and a trumpeter's, only his whiskers standing boldly out like wings made it rather more approximate to the former.

Mr. Joseph Tymmons's only peculiarity was attending every wedding that took place within ten miles round, no doubt to study how he was to comport himself against the time when he should act a principal part at one, for he made it a point to propose to every young lady he danced with twice, and had thereby obtained the title of "Solicitor-General," which his sire looked upon as a lucky professional omen. Mr. Tymmons, senior, requires no separate description, for he was whatever his wife and daughters pleased; and his dress, which was the principal part of him, consisted, all the year round, of a snuff-coloured coat, mud-coloured breeches and gaiters of the same, except in full dress, when it was exchanged for a blue coat, gilt buttons, white waistcoat, and black breeches. The three younger Miss Tymmonses were not remarkable for anything beyond the way their hair kept in curl in all weathers, and the constancy with which they talked of "the officers," there being generally a detachment of cavalry quartered at Triverton, and the promptitude with which they wrote to London for the "Key" (!) of every fashionable novel that came out, and got the names by heart. So much for Miss Maria, Sarah, and Isabella Tymmons. The remaining scions consisted of Master Grimstone Tymmons, aged four, who did as much mischief, ate as much apple-pudding, and accumulated as many scratched faces, as any young gentleman of the same tender years,—to say nothing of his exercising a truly manly degree of embryo bashawism over his younger sister, Miss Barbara Tymmons, who not yet being able to walk, had no means of running away from his persecutions, and could therefore only defend herself from them, by proving, with the perfectionised skill of eighteen months' practice, that her lungs were perfectly sound. Scarcely had the fly crawled out of Lavender-lane, before Mrs. Tymmons began panting, and patting her sides with sundry affectionate pats of her little fat hands.

"My dear *mith* Mac Screw," lisped she at last, in a most humble and imploring voice, "would it be too much for you if I had a bit of the fly open? it is so very close."

"O dear no, should like it of all things—these hard times glad to raise the wind, you know—raise the wind—he! he! he!"

Now Mrs. Tymmons knew that Miss Mac Screw never tittered at the end of one of her own speeches, without meaning to let people know that she had said something which she thought witty; so

accordingly Mrs. Tymmons laughed, and said, "Very good, very good indeed, Miss Mac Screw;" but Miss Tymmons looked even more grave than usual, for she did not think it was "*genteel*" to talk about wind, and raising the wind she thought a particularly "*ungenteel*" expression.

"Seraphina, my love," said her mother, "just put your head out of the window, and tell *Alontho* to stop and open the carriage."

Seraphina did as she was desired, but exactly in the low, faint, inaudible voice that might naturally be supposed to issue from a fly—consequently Alonso did not hear.

"Never mind, love, I'll call to him," said Mrs. Tymmons, squeezing her bust through the window, and screaming at the top of her voice, "*Alontho, Alontho, Alontho!* you stupid oaf, are you deaf?"

"Yes, ma'am," said Alonso, pulling up; but whether in answer to the sound or the sense of his mistress's interrogation is not known.

"Open a bit of the carriage," resumed Mrs. Tymmons.

"Yes, ma'am," said Alonso, thumping away with a stone at the obstinate hinges of the fly, which, however, at length yielded, after undergoing, for ten minutes, as much martyrdom as St. Stephen; a strip of the fly was opened, and a slice of air let in, much to the relief of Mrs. Tymmons, who drew one long breath previous to telling Alonso to drive to the bank. No sooner had they arrived there than Miss Mac Screw got into a terrible flutter, assuring them she would not be a minute, and therefore begging that neither of them would take the trouble of accompanying her. Alighting from the fly, she made a precipitate rush into the bank, which to her great satisfaction contained nobody but the clerk, who seeing Miss Mac Screw, and knowing that her usual demand was from three to five pounds, got both sums ready.

"Don't want money to-day—come to leave money, come to leave money," said she, hopping up to his desk, and beginning to untie her bonnet, which, however, was a work of some little time and trouble, she having tied it in a multitude of knots for further security. At length the last was undone, and the poor clerk could with difficulty keep his countenance, when he beheld Miss Mac Screw's monk-like coiffeur, her head being perfectly bald, and her forehead alone decorated with the tufts of dusty black curls. "Here," said she, unpinning the two fifty pound notes, and placing them before the clerk, while she looked cautiously round to see that no one was looking or listening—"here, you see how much it's for," pointing to the amount, for she would not breathe it for the world lest it might be overheard, "and you'll give me a receipt for it—quick, if you please, quick."

"You have a fine clear head for business, ma'am," said the

clerk, with a half smile, glancing at her bald pate, as he removed the pen from behind his ear to write the receipt, which he no sooner handed to her than it was pinned in the same place that its predecessors, the fifty pound notes, had previously occupied, and Miss Mac Screw shuffled out of the bank even faster than she had shuffled into it. "Sorry to have kept you so long," said she, scrambling into the fly, "but these people at country banks are so stupid, there's no getting an answer from them—no getting an answer from them."

"I'm sure you've not been at all long," said Mrs. Tymmons—"has she, Seraphina?"

"By no means," dulcified Seraphina.

"Where to now, Miss Mac Screw?" inquired Mrs. Tymmons, as Alonso stood holding the brim of his hat with his whip-hand, to the great risk of putting out his right eye.

"O, there is a cheap shoemaker's in Silver-street—I mean he is poor, poor you know, and it's a charity to deal with poor people, and he's selling off, you know—selling off—his name is White, he has some shoes of mine to alter—to alter—I should like to go and see if they are done."

"Go to White's, the shoemaker, in Silver-street."

"Yes, ma'am," said Alonso, ascending the box, and urging on the reluctant steed.

"Hope I'm not taking you out of the way though—out of the way?" said Miss Mac Screw.

"Not in the *leathst*," responded Mrs. Tymmons; I'm *thure* we're alwayth happy to be of any *uthe* to you, Mith Mac Screw."

Suddenly the fly stopped, "*Whath's* the matter?" screamed Mrs. Tymmons.

"Nothing ma'am," said Alonso, stretching over his body and looking down through the aperture in the fly, "only they're mending the street, and I can't get up."

"Dear, dear, how very *tirethome*," cried Mrs. Tymmons; "would you mind walking as far as the shoemaker's my dear *Mith* Mac Screw?"

"Not in the least, not in the least," said that accommodating lady; accordingly the three graces descended from the fly, and walked up Silver-street, till they got to the shoemaker's, which was the last shop in the street.

"Are my shoes done, Mr. White?" asked Miss Mac Screw, hobbling into the shop.

"Why, ma'am," said Mr. White, who was busily employed pasting some bills, and evidently in all the chaos of removing, "one of them has been mended so often that I really could not make a job of it at all, but I'll let you have a new pair very cheap, as I am selling off."

"What do you call very cheap? All an excuse for not mending the others—all an excuse; tradespeople always impose upon one—always impose upon one."

"Why, ma'am," replied Mr. White, totally disregarding the compliment to himself and his order, "five shillings I call very cheap."

"O shocking! dreadful!" screamed Miss Mac Screw, throwing herself into a chair; "sha'n't give you any such thing—robbery, perfect robbery; but give me some shoes to try."

Now it was not to be expected that Miss Mac Screw could even contemplate disbursing so large a sum as four or five shillings, without taking all due precautions to ascertain which pair of Mr. White's shoes could possibly be worth such a sum; accordingly she spent full half an hour in balancing between their contending claims: it so happened, as we have before stated, when the three ladies entered the shop, that Mr. White was busy pasting bills, which were, in fact, no other than announcements that his shop was to be let, contained in the words, "To be disposed of, inquire of the proprietor," in large printed letters, and, in his hurry to attend to his customers, he put the last bill he had pasted aside, by placing it with the pasted side upwards, on the back of a chair. Unfortunately it was into this very chair Miss Mac Screw had flung herself, and leaning back for so long a period as half an hour, the aforesaid bill, meeting no impediment in the very flat surface of her tight-backed spencer, had ample time, not only to adhere, but to dry upon her back. "Well," said she, rising at length, "send me this pair to-morrow morning, but remember I sha'n't give you anything like five shillings."

Mrs. and Miss Tymmons had walked out of the shop. Mr. White walked side by side with Miss Mac Screw, protesting he could not let her have the shoes for less; so that poor Miss Mac Screw joined her friends in the street without the remotest idea that she was enacting the part of the "Public Advertiser," till she heard the "hue and cry" her appearance occasioned. Shouts of laughter greeted her as she passed along, while, to add to her astonishment, all the faces she met were perfectly grave; but behind her the tumult was increasing every minute; till at length she was surrounded by a mob of boys, hooting and yelling, with pocket handkerchiefs tied on sticks, which they waved over her like flags. One cried out, "How much do you ask for yourself, old money-spinner?" while another answered, "They say she's worth a plum, but I would not give two-pence for her;" and a third screamed still louder, "No, no, the debentures are all very well; but any one may have the *personals* for me."

Poor Miss Mac Screw turned and twisted, and twisted and turned; but the more she turned, the more the mob laughed and shouted;

and in one of her turnings Mrs. and Miss Tymmons discovered the cause of all their mirth. The former nearly went into hysterics on the spot; and Miss Seraphina would have made it a point to faint, but that she providentially remembered, just as she was going off against a lamp-post, that she had somewhere read in one of her favourite fashionable novels that there was nothing so vulgar as making a scene, even let the provocation be what it might; accordingly she returned to the perpendicular, and looked immoveable. At this crisis, who should pass along the opposite side of the street but the Reverend Nathaniel Peter Hoskins? True, a gulf yawned between him and his Lavinia, of scattered mould and upturned stones, while within the deep abyss were gas-pipes black and bare as the phantoms of a German forest. What of this?

“Love’s heralds should be thoughts,
Which ten times faster glide than the sun’s beams;
Driving back shadows over low’ring hills.
Therefore do nimble-pinion’d doves draw Love,
And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.”

Wherefore, this being the part Mr. Hoskins determined to act, the air in the narrow street became suddenly darkened, as it were, with long black legs and arms, rustling like the wings of the glums and glowries, as the fascinating Peter flung himself across the street to the rescue of his “ladye love,” and with one magic incantation, performed by a circular movement of his walking-stick above their heads, and a quickly-uttered spell, in which the words beadle, treadmill, and stocks, were the only ones audible, the mob evaporated instantaneously.

“Bless me!” said Miss Mac Screw, backing into a shop, in which she and her companions all took refuge, “is that you, Mr. Hoskins? you know I never was to speak to you again—never was to speak to you again; but, as the proverb says, misfortune brings one acquainted with strange——”

“Bedfellows,” achieved Peter, floundering through one of his most gallant bows, and grinning like a face over a hall-door.

“Will you be so good as to tell me,” said Miss Mac Screw, first feeling one of her arms, and then the other, as though anxious to ascertain beyond a doubt her own identity, “now that you have got rid of those odious wretches—what they were all hooting and yelling about, and following me?—me, of all people in the world, who for the last ten years have been in the habit of walking through Blichingly, from morning till night, without ever being followed by any one.”

Mr. Hoskins spoke in a broad northern accent, always saying booke, for book; augh, for I; vagabone for vagabond; with several other little elocutionary gems that gave a brilliancy and zest to everything he uttered. So, casting a retrospective glance

at the placard on Miss Mac Screw's back, he replied, wriggling through another bow—

“Augh raley do n't know, unless it is the tempting notice ye have pasted on yer bock—‘To be disposed of, inquire of the proprietor ;’ and I can only assure ye, Miss Mac Screw, that I *hop* to find myself on the list of opplicants for so valuable and desirable a property.”

“All you are saying may be very witty and clever, I have no doubt—very witty and clever ; but as I do not understand one word of it, I'll thank you to speak in plain English—plain English,” said Miss Mac Screw, drawing up with the tyrannical air of a coquettish young beauty.

“My dear *Mith* Mac Screw,” cried Mrs. Tymmons, coming to her kinsman's assistance, “*ith a moht* unfortunate *conter-tong*, (Mrs. Tymmons was in the habit of speaking French with the dowager Lady De Clifford,) but when you were at White's you leant against a chair that had one of hith billths on the back of it, and it stuck to your spenther, thath all, and the mob, theeing it, followed uth, und hooted uth they did, and it ith to that bill my couthen alludes.”

“O dear, how very dreadful, shocking, terrible ! Sha 'nt pay White any thing for the shoes after his having those horrid bills,—and shall never enter his vile shop again, for fear he should do something worse to me.”

“*Ne sutor ultra crepidam*,” muttered Hoskins.

“What's that ? what's that ?” asked Miss Mac Screw.

“Augh was saying augh defy him to go beyond his *last* act of atrocity, and augh think yer quite right in yer resolve of never entering his shop again after such a bill ; for though one ought always be ready to *meet* a bill, yet augh declares it's not pleasant to be endorsed in this way oneself, as it does not get one *honoured at sight* ;” and Peter's teeth protruded more than ever, as he passed his hand over his mouth to hide an ill-timed grin at his own bad puns.

“A-hem ! Miss Seraphina, my dear, do be so good as to take that odious bill off my back—of my back ; looks so shocking, you know—so shocking.

Miss Seraphina tried and tried, but the obstinate paper would only come off by instalments.

“I cannot get it all out, I fear,” said she, in a languid voice, tired of her exertions.

“Augh doubt it's a difficult matter to get ony thing out of her,” muttered Peter *sotto voce*, walking to the door to hide another grin.

“I think,” interrupted Mrs. Tymmons, sympathisingly, “my couthin had better go to the carriage for your shawl, *Mith* Mac Screw ?”

Peter waited for no further orders, but rushed out of the shop

like a whirlwind, and strode down the street *à la monstre* in Frankenstein, till he reached the fly, and Alonzo handed him out Miss Mac Screw's variegated lambswool garment, with which he returned at the same speed. When he entered the shop, he flung himself on one knee, and said, in a theatrical tone, as he presented it to its owner, "How augh envy this happy shawl, to cover so much beauty and grace!"

"Nonsense, perfect nonsense; you either take me for a fool, or are mad—quite mad," said Miss Mac Screw, gathering the friendly worsted rainbow tightly round her, and walking out of the shop.

"'Twas your beauty made me so, then," persisted Peter, walking by her side and bowing over his hands, which he had first placed on his heart, while his sharp and bony elbows stood out in fine relief, like the handles of an Etruscan vase. "It's to be hoped," continued he, "that ye'll let me see you safe *hom*; for ye see the dangers a lone woman is exposed to."

"No dangers at all,—no dangers at all. Dine at Mr. Tymmons's—dine at Mr. Tymmons's."

"Maugh I never eat another dinner if augh don't dine there too!" chuckled Peter, with un-put-down-able and un-offend-able gallantry; "for augh 'm sure my cousin Sarah there would never be so inhospitable as to shut her doors upon a relation with such a *fule* heart and empty stomach as augh am suffering from at this moment."

"Why, my dear Peter, you know the way we are thituated," said Mrs. Tymmons, shaking her head; "conthider our small" (*Anglice*, large) "family; and you know it would be ath much ath all Mithter Tymmons's other practith ith worth, to offend old Lady De Clifford; and if she wath to hear that we athked you to dinner, I don't know what the conthequence might be, particularly after her standing god-mother to Barbara."

"Augh think yer very right not to ask me to dinner, if you think it would offend the auld duchess, and lose ye anything; but it maks all the difference if I ask myself to dinner. And if auld Lady Overreach should hear of it, why she could only say that it did *great credit to my head and hort* to wish to be on such friendly terms with my relations." So saying, Peter, sans ceremonie, leapt into the fly, after depositing Miss Mac Screw and his cousins in it first, and, in a maître de la maison tone, ordered Alonso to drive home—that is, to Mr. Tymmons's red-bricked, green-doored, and brass-knocked edifice in High-street, where they had no sooner arrived, than Alonso was ordered by Miss Tymmons to *rap* loud, as there was nothing so "ungenteel" as for a servant to give one of those little, diffident, poor-relation, come-to-borrow-money sort of knocks. Alonso's appeal was, after some delay, answered by a smart rosy-cheeked maid, all ringlets and blue ribbons, whose

clothes Master Grimstone Tymmons was exerting all the strength of one hand to tear off her back, for in the other he held a thick piece of bread and butter, veneered with raspberry jam; his mouth being also full of the same horticultural and agricultural condiments, prevented his enforcing his commands by words as explicit and compulsory as he was in the habit of using, which drove him to the *argumentum ad hominem*, to the great danger of Mary the maid's chali dress, the gift of Miss Seraphina, as a reward for her having once gone at midnight, and knocked up the people at the library, to get her a novel.

"My dear Grimthtone," said the fond mother, in a voice so piano that it could not have intimidated a fly, "you really mutht not be tho naughty; now go in, love, do, and you thall pull Ithabella's hair, if you like."

"But Isabella's paying, and se wo n't et me," bread-and-buttered Master Grimstone.

"Ah, ye young vagabone!" said Hoskins, striding into the hall, and seizing the unfortunate urchin with both hands by the throat, and suspending him in the air, "come here till I show you London."

Great but unavailing were the screams of Master Grimstone, as his mother left him to his fate, to open the drawing-room door for Miss Mac Screw. Mrs. Tymmons piqued herself upon her drawing-room. It was a square room, of tolerable dimensions, on the left hand side of the hall, opposite the dining-room and Mr. Tymmons's study—for Miss Seraphina said it was not genteel to call it an office. From the centre of the drawing-room was suspended an or-molu lamp, with three circular burners, the whole of which was now defended against the flies by a yellow leno bag, as was the frame of the looking-glass, the gilding of Miss Tymmons's harp, and the frames of the portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Tymmons, the former of which was represented with an open letter in his hand, with a very large red seal on it, a volume of Blackstone open on a table, with a bundle of papers tied with red tape, and a red morocco spectacle-case, ("Bradbury," in gilt letters, upon it,) lying on the Commentaries, while in the back ground hung a purple stuff bag, apparently very full. This graced the space over the looking-glass, and on the opposite wall hung the effigy of Mrs. T., in a black satin gown, with a pointed body, a white blond scarf, and a gold tissue turban. On her lap sat a baby, with a coral and gilt bells, which formed a rich and Titian-like contrast to the *white kid gloves* upon its mother's hands. Papier-maché-looking miniatures of the younger branches of the family graced each side of the chimney-piece; and one, in especial, of Mr. Algernon Tymmons, who having attained to a company in the Bengal cavalry, his fond mother had had him drawn in full regimentals, blowing the bugle.

Though far advanced in October, no fire dimmed the brazen

brightness of the grate; for Mrs. Tymmons never allowed fires before the first of November — her mother, and grandmother, and great-grandmother before her had never done so, and the weather was, of course, the same now as it had been then; so instead of fire was suspended, like a curtain before the bars, an elaborate honeycomb of yellow silver paper. The carpet consisted of beautiful drab squares, with bunches of blue flowers upon them, intersected with blue circles and drab bouquets; but particularly clean and cold-looking brown holland defended the chief part of its beauties from profane footsteps. The chairs were of course rosewood, covered with blue tabouret cushions and brown holland dressing-gowns, and were ranged so regularly and fixedly along the wall, that they looked as if nothing short of galvanism could move them. Two stiff, hard, boarding-school-looking sofas fac-similed each other at either side of the fireplace. The nicknackery of the room consisted of divers plates, kettles, and inkstands, intended to imitate old Dresden, by large red, orange, blue, and green clumsily-cut flowers, but bearing a much stronger resemblance to the carrot and turnip floral emblems on the hams and tongues at one of Mrs. Tymmons's own dinners. These, with jardinières filled with worsted and cloth dahlias, perforated card-screens, with Berlin work, and little egg-cuppy-looking vases festooned with rice-paper flowers, formed, with the addition of a few annuals, and pens with bead devices, and Hessian-boot-looking tassels at the end of them, the ornamental part of the furniture. At the upper end of the room, with purple nose, and still more purple hands, sat Miss Isabella Tymmons at a grand piano, thumping out detachments of the Huguenot galope.

“My dear Bella,” said Mrs. Tymmons, as Miss Mac Screw and Mr. Hoskins seated themselves on one of the Grandisonian-looking sofas, and Mrs. Tymmons received her son from the latter—“My dear Bella, I'm sure you've practhithed long enough; and do let poor Grimmy pull your hair, or do anything to keep him quiet, while I go and speak to your pa on buthineth.”

“Really that child is so spoilt, there is no bearing him,” said Miss Isabella, rising pettishly, and advancing to shake hands with Miss Mac Screw and her cousin Peter.

Leaving the latter to press his suit as he best might, Mrs. Tymmons waddled out of the room “to see about” luncheon and “after” her husband. Upon opening the “study” door, she found her spouse (though only one o'clock) with his legs considerably elongated under the archway of the library table, his hands in the pockets of his small-clothes, his shoulders shrugged up till they supported his ample ears, his under lip much protruded, and widely severed from the upper, while a loud, deep, and sonorous grunting gave unequivocal evidence of his being fast asleep. On

one side of the table lay Tomlin's Law Dictionary, open at *quare impedit*; and before him a letter he was writing to the Dowager Lady De Clifford, over which he had apparently fallen asleep at the following sentence, as it was the last written. "Grantee of a next avoidance may bring this writ against the patron who granted the avoidance—39 Hen. 6."

Mrs. Tymmons glanced her eye over the letter, and then shaking her lord rather roughly, said, "Really, Mithter Tymmons, I think your patron may bring this writ against you, if this is the manner in which you fall asleep over her buthineth; besides, here is Peter Hoskins has insisted upon dining with us, to carry on his nonsense with Miss Mac Screw; and if the old lady should hear of our letting him into the house, after the way in which you have pretended to abuse him to her, I'm sure I don't know what will be the conthequenth."

"Eh, eh?" muttered Mr. Tymmons, "rolling his head more to the left, without however opening his eyes, and letting the words fall, much mutilated, out of his mouth. "Pleas in bar, such as a release, the statute of limitations, agreement with satisfaction, etc. etc., destroy the plaintiff's action for ever; but pleas in abatement are temporary and dilatory, and do not destroy the action,—only stop the cause for a while, till the defect is removed. Take away the mutton, and bring the goose—d——d tough, Mrs. T.—d——d tough! Send those children out of the room. The general issue of general plea is what traverses, thwarts, and denies at once the whole declaration, without offering any special matter whereby to evade it. As in a trespass, either *vi et armis*, or——"

"Mithter Tymmons!" screamed his better half, shaking him so roughly by the arm, that his throat rattled as though he were dying, and he opened one eye very widely, exclaiming, "God bless my soul! what's the matter?"

"Matter enough, Mr. Tymmons—what a pretty example it ith to your sonths to thee you thleeping away your whole time in thith way!"

Mr. Tymmons now opened both his eyes, removed his hands from the pockets of his unmentionables, stretched them above his head, and gave one loud, long, "sleep-no-more" sort of yawn. After which, placing his arm round his wife's waist, and drawing her towards him, said, "Well, duckey, what is it?"

"It is too bad your being fast athleep at thith time of day," persisted Mrs. Tymmons."

"Ehem, I never sleep, lovey, when you are with me," said the tender Tymmons, with a look that would have brought any other man into Doctors' Commons.

"Well, but dear," euphonised Mrs T., condescendingly seating herself upon his knee, and stroking his fat red cheek, "you really

should not thleep in the middle of the day; and I want to speak to you upon buthineth."

"Your business is my pleasure," replied the gallant husband, taking his wife's fat face in both his hands, and imprinting a kiss upon her voluminous lips; "what is it, my lily?"

"Why, here'th Mither Hothkinth inthith upon dining with uth to-day becauthe Miss Mac Screw's here."

"Egad, that's capital," cried Mr. Tymmons, rubbing his hands, "I'll give him every opportunity of winning his bet, though it's against myself; but if he gets the old girl, it will be such a famous thing for the family!"

"Yeth, but while heth talking over the old girl, how will you talk over the old lady?" asked Mrs. Tymmons.

"O, easily enough, leave that to me; I have not been humbugging here these four years, without knowing how to manage her. I must only lay it on a little thicker about her being so exceedingly clever, and having such a wonderful knowledge of business, abuse Hoskins a little more, and not look too business-like myself, so as to let her think she could easily overreach me; interlard my letters with similes and poetry, and that sort of thing, which Rush can always supply me with, you know, lovey, and then I can knead her like dough."

"Ah, you gentlemen" (for common people never say men and women) "are sad dethievers, sad dethievers," said Mrs. Tymmons, with a most proper wifely look of conscious inferiority, and vivid admiration for the stupendous structure of her husband's masculine intellect.

"Now, lovey," resumed her sposo, drawing his chair close to the table and dipping his pen into the ink, "let me finish my letter to the old lady, and order dinner at half-past four, and be sure we've a bottle of that old Burgundy port that I bought at Lord Cramwell's sale, for Hoskins likes a good bottle of wine as well as any man, and perhaps by dint of it I may get him to suppress that pamphlet about Mary Lee, for it won't do to let him go too great lengths against this family, especially as I have had Richard Brindal with me all the morning, who tells me that Mary Lee positively refuses to marry him, so that scheme has failed; and if every other does too, the old lady may begin to suspect both my abilities and my allegiance, and that's what must not be. So you must tell Hoskins, ducky, that unless he is content to be more pacific towards the dowager for the future, and moreover to publicly attribute his being so to my remonstrances and interference, he need not expect any trystings with Miss Mac Screw in this house."

"I will, dear," responded Mrs. Tymmons, moving towards the door.

“And, lovey,” cried Mr. T., calling her back, “be sure we have some *souse*, for I am *particklar partial* to *souse*.” (1)

As Alonso was not only charioteer, but “chief butler,” the asses could not be fed till the horse was attended to; consequently Mrs. Tymmons had to fuss about for some time before the luncheon was ready, to Miss Mac Screw’s no small annoyance, for, being both cold and hungry, the warmth of Mr. Hoskins’s protestations became doubly disagreeable to her; but when luncheon was announced, and he led her into the dining-room, he contrived to transfer such a quantity of cold beef and mashed potatoes to her plate, that in a short time she became not only affable, but facetious, as she crammed herself into good-humour.

“Now, to prove what stories you tell,” said she to the amiable Peter, her mouth so full as to render her words almost inaudible, “you say you would do anything if I would marry you—he! he! he! Now the only thing that would make me marry you, I know, you would not, and could not do—he! he! he!”

“Name it,” said Peter, gallantly, “and be it what it may, augh tak my cousin Sarah and the girls to witness that augh ’ll do it; and if ye prefer the promise being legally attested, augh ’ll call in Mr. Tymmons; so just say what it is.”

“He! he! he!” tittered Miss Mac Screw, “you can’t—can’t; so I’m quite safe—quite safe. You would not play a tune on the fiddle in the midst of one of your sermons, now would you?” said she triumphantly.

For a moment Mr. Hoskins’s visage elongated, but soon rallying, he replied, “Well! yes, even that augh ’ll do; but augh do n’t know if I can pley the feedle, because ye see augh never tried; and as it may tak me some leetle time to *laren*, augh should like to know how long ye’d give me to do it.”

“O, till doomsday—till doomsday,” chuckled Miss Mac Screw.

“Augh declare that sort of *ad græcas calendas* is not fair, and augh think augh ought to insist upon a definite time being named for the match to come off, as they say on the turf,” cried Hoskins.

“*Moth dethidedly*,” said Mrs. Tymmons and her daughters unanimously, the latter much amused at the trap Miss Mac Screw had got herself into, for they knew their worthy cousin to be a man *capable de tout*.

“But,” resumed Mrs. Tymmons, who thought it only prudent not too appear too eager in forwarding her kinsman’s designs, “you

(1) As there may be persons in the world as ignorant as I myself was respecting *souse*, till I discovered what it was in an American cookery-book that recently came in my way, I think it right to impart the information I then and there acquired, by informing such ignoramuses that *souse* is nothing more nor less than macadamized pig’s feet and ears plunged into a Stygian lake of vinegar, and mummied with spices.

surely never would or could play the violin in the pulpit; it would be thutch a dithgrathe to a clergyman, and particularly to you who have given uth thuth evangelical dithcourtheth of late."

"That's the *vary* reason," said Peter, "augh'll not only do it, but augh'll make it an instrument of great instrooktion to my congregation. Augh do n't see why sarmons may not be foond in feedles as well as stones, and goode in *avery* thing."

"He'll never do it," whispered Mrs. Tymmons, very diplomatically, to Miss Mac Screw; "he could n't, you know it would be quite impossible," and then added aloud, as if to play off Hoskins, "Now really, my dear Mith Mac Screw, you ought to name thome fixed period for putting my couthin to the tetht, after thuth a gal-lant offer on hith part."

"Yes, you really ought," chorussed the young ladies.

"He, he, he!" giggled Miss Mac Screw, abstractedly helping herself to some more beef; "well, next midsummer then, next midsummer—fine weather you know, fine weather, and the church will be fuller."

"Very true, only it's a long time to wait—for many a slip between the cup and the lip; but we'll make sure of one, at all events," said he, pouring out two glasses of wine, and presenting one to Miss Mac Screw, while he took the other himself. "Here's success to our wishes, which ye'll allow is fair, Miss Mac Screw, for though augh don't know what your wishes may be, I know perfectly what my own are."

At this juncture Mr. Joseph Tymmons entered, having just returned from a wedding five miles off, and gave a most glowing description of the bride's beauty and bonnet, and of the bridegroom's waistcoat and Waterloo blue cravat.

"Our wedding shall beat all the weddings that have been for the last century," whispered Peter, drawing his chair so close to Miss Mac Screw's, that he nearly found himself in her lap.

"Get away—get away," said she, backing her chair, and beating him away with her hand as one does a wasp—"get away—

' She partly is to blame who has been tried;
He comes too near who comes to be denied,'

you know."

"Yes, yes, augh know that's not worth coming for; but augh hop to come for something better next midsummer."

"Where ith Rush, Joseph?" inquired Mrs. Tymmons.

"Oh!" said Joseph, "in the clouds as usual. He went to see the industrious fleas yesterday, and has been writing an ode on them ever since."

"Ith quite shocking," moaned Mrs. Tymmons, "he studies so hard, he'll kill himself."

"No doubt, he'll go out like a rushlight some of these days," said Peter, with one of his stentorian laughs.

"Oh, you've no thoul for poetry," said Mrs. Tymmons; "but really some of hith things are quite ath good ath Lord Byron's!"

"Very likely," replied Hoskins with great gravity; "while at the same time it must be a great source of satisfaction to you, Sarah, to think that he'll never write anything as bad as Don Juan, Heaven and Earth, and the Vision of Judgment."

"It ith, indeed," said Mrs. Tymmons, turning up her eyes with an exulting look of maternal pride and gratulation.

Here a short pause ensued in the conversation, while Alonso was summoned to take away the things. Till four o'clock nothing of any importance occurred, except Master Grimstone's stealing a lump of damson cheese with his fingers, as it was exiting with Alonso, and afterwards surreptitiously wiping the aforesaid fingers in the back of Miss Mac Screw's dress, which varied without improving it; but at four o'clock a deep and solemn sound was heard—it was Alonso outside the drawing-room door, giving three distinct thumps with the kitchen poker against the lid of a copper fish-kettle. This was an invention of the gifted Seraphina, who knew that at Blichingly Park, Campfield, and, in short, all the great houses she had ever heard of, a gong announced to the assembled guests when it was time to dress for dinner, and this was the best imitation of it she could devise. As Miss Mac Screw invariably transferred the black holyoaks from the Leghorn bonnet to the pocket handkerchief toque for dinner, she ascended with the young ladies for the purpose of doing so, which left Mrs. Tymmons an opportunity of making known her husband's wishes to Mr. Hoskins, and extorting from him (in the plenitude of his delight at having so far succeeded with Miss Mac Screw) a promise to comply with them.

The young ladies and their guest had scarcely re-descended to the drawing-room, and been joined by Mr. Tymmons, (who entered in high good humour, having succeeded in coaxing his wife into having a fire in the drawing-room,) when that universal genius and ubiquitous individual, Alonso, announced dinner, which he had no sooner done than a great deal of sprightly badinage ensued between Messrs. Tymmons and Hoskins, as to which of them should have the honour of taking Miss Mac Screw in to dinner, Mr. T. wittily observing, that it was more *lawful* (!) for him to do so, and Mr. H. replying, with equal wit, that it was more *orthodox* for him to do so, adding another spice of pleasantry, in the further assertion that he was a young man on his preferment: this of course decided the point. As every one must have some Tymmonses amongst their acquaintance, and must have dined with them at election or other times, it is perhaps needless to describe

the fuss that took place respecting seats upon their entering the dining-room, and the jokes which warmed the guests, but cooled the dinner, about "the gentlemen dividing the ladies;" while Mr. Hoskins assured his cousins, with a wink, that they ought to hold up their heads, for he was sure they would not always have to sit next their brothers, and though certain events might give him more to do, yet for all that he sincerely wished it. Here followed a great deal of blushing, and twisting of ringlets, and "La, what do you mean?" from the young ladies.

At length they were actually seated, but not without poor Miss Mac Screw having been twice made to change her seat *nolens volens*, from the assurance, first, that she was too hot at that side, and then that she was too cold at the other, she vehemently but vainly denying both charges. Mrs. Tymmons, like Mrs. Primrose, always "carved all the meat for all the company," and spent every moment that she was not eating in praising everything on the table, and assuring every one that it was the best in the world, which she did by the elegant exclamation of "O my! did you ever taste the like of that?" and those not in the habit of dining there, could with truth answer Never!

"On hospitable thoughts intent," she not only helped everything but deluged everything she helped with melted butter, to the no small annoyance of Miss Seraphina, who knew that all such condiments ought to be handed round; but, alas! as Alonso was not Briareus, she dared not even hint at this ambulating circular reform. Another thing too that greatly disgusted her, (as well it might,) was the sulphureous-looking straw mats that Mrs. Tymmons persisted in under the dishes. Miss Seraphina had, on more than one occasion, expressed her opinion of them, by saying, it really looked as if they had once been straw-bonnet-makers, and so had used up all their spare straw when they left off business; but even this did not do, and the mats stood their ground. Everything at the table was an imitation of something; each dish might have been labelled, *Aut navis aut galerus*,—the mutton was roasted to imitate venison, the soup was mock turtle, potato loaves played the part of risolés without anything in them, and a pea-hen took refuge in celery-sauce, and passed itself off for a turkey. It was not till dinner was half over, and the "gentlemen had asked the ladies" over and over again to take wine, and Mr. Tymmons had praised his "Burgundy port," quite as much as his wife had lauded the dinner and the cookery, that Mr. Rush Tymmons made his *entrée*, his throat bare, and tempting assassination—his eyes "in a fine frenzy rolling," and apparently totally unconscious of the presence of any one. Miss Seraphina made room for him beside herself, which she was in duty bound to do, for she it was who was the cause of his being so late, for she was always

telling him that the genius of every aristocratic family (when there was one) invariably either kept every one waiting dinner an hour, or else walked in when it was half over. Now it so happened that this day, of all days in the year, poor Mr. Rush was most unpoetically hungry; but sooner than violate the aristocratic standard of genius, he had stood for a full quarter of an hour outside the dining-room door, quadrupling his appetite by the *friande* steams of the forbidden feast.

“Why, Rush,” said his sire, “always last?”

“At all events I hope not least, sir,” said Mr. Rush, modestly.

“No, no, that ye can never be, as long as ye are six feet high, and all yer brothers so much shorter,” said Hoskins, with a laugh and a wink that were anything but complimentary to Mr. Rush’s greatness, and for which that gentleman planned lampoons on him for the rest of dinner.

“As everything is cold by this time,” said Mr. Tymmons, senior, “you had better try some of my souse, pointing to the seductive *plat* on the dumb-waiter beside him. Mr. Rush looked wild boars at his progenitor, for insulting his delicacy by such a proposition, and, glancing at a chicken, “motioned” to Alonso to bring him some, which when he had discussed, he gallantly drank toast and water with all his sisters, for he never touched wine. When the cloth was removed, and very small divers-coloured worsted doyleys placed before every one, with *one* wine-glass upon each, and Alonso had knocked down the last trayful of things, Mr. Hoskins became so alarmingly demonstrative to Miss Mac Screw, that Mrs. Tymmons was fain to do something to turn the current of his thoughts, and seeing Mr. Rush, with his eyes fixed upon the ceiling, as if watching the arrival of a new cargo of ideas, which, no doubt, come straight from heaven through the roof of the house, as people always look for them in that direction, she ventured to request that they might be favoured with a sight of his ode upon the fleas.

“Now do, my dear Rush,” urged his fond mother, “for I’m thure ith beautiful, like everything you write.”

Mr. Rush blushed and stammered, and declared it was not yet finished.

“Well, but let uth thee as much of it ath ith done,” entreated his mother.

“Why, certainly, if you wish it,” said the obedient son, glancing round the table for further suffrages.

“Do, Rush,” nodded his father, who again began to feel somniferously inclined, and who knew his son’s effusions were infallible narcotics.

“Well,” said Rush, drawing the precious *morceau* from his waistcoat pocket, where it had lain like a love-letter in a post-

office, 'to be kept till called for,'—"remember it's not *finished*, and it's an irregular ode,"—and irregular enough it certainly was,—“and in order to make you understand it, I should tell you that one flea enacts Napoleon, another the Duke of Wellington, two more O'Connell and Lord Alvanley fighting a duel, a whole band imitate Strauss's, while two young fleas are flirting in a drawing-room, and the mamma flea is reading a newspaper, and does not see them. After this clear and lucid explanation, Mr. Rush smoothed the crumpled ode, and read as follows, his mother exclaiming, by way of prelude, “How very interething!”

ODE TO THE INDUSTRIOUS FLEAS.

Silent, subtle, hopping flea!
 Napoleon's self may be in thee;
 For still thou dost present to me
 A marvel and a mystery!
 But Wellington thou canst not be,
 Since 't is well known *he* ne'er did *flee*,
 Then jump and bite,
 And take thy flight,
 Like Joseph, when from Zulica he
 Did take his garments up and flee,
 While sages say and shake their head,
 “'T was Fleance did it, for 't was Fleance fled.”
 If blame you'd shun,
 Ne'er cut and run.
 But what is this? Oh, fire and fuel!
 Next see O'Connell in a duel,—
 Nay, surely, sir, the mighty Dan
 May kill but never flee his man.
 O keep, St. Kevin,
 His vow in heaven!
 But list! Flea fiddlers fill the house,
 With sounds not quite so good as Strauss';
 A damsel's in a ball-room flirting,
 Her mother's chap'ronage deserting;
 A flea in ear,
 She'll get, I fear!

“That's all I've done yet,” said Mr. Rush, looking round for admiration.

“O, very clever—very clever indeed,” cried Mrs. Tymmons; “in fact tho clever, that ith not every one that would underthand it.”

“It's a great deal cleverer than that,” said Hoskins, “for augh don't think there's ony one who could understand it.”

“Well, that ith a great deal for you to thay, Peter? and your praithe ith worth having about poetry (!) ith so hard to get,” said Mrs. Tymmons; “and,” continued she, “thuch a pretty compliment to the Duke of Wellington, I'm thure hith Grathe would be much flattered if he heard it, and he could not doubt ith sintherity,

beca' the you are juth to O'Connell, calling him the mighty Dan; but ith quite delightful, my dear Rush, to thee a young man of your age, though really liberal in politics, giving merit on every *thide* where merit is due."

"D——n those fleas," muttered Mr. Tymmons, starting from his slumbers; "they are all over me," continued he, scratching the back of his hands.

"There, Master Rush," laughed Hoskins, "'*ough* advise you to make the most of *that*, for it's as *grat* a compliment as the birds pecking at the grapes of Zeuxis."

"My dear—my dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Tymmons, screaming at her spouse, "you're going to sleep again—let uth have tea, and that will waken you."

Tea was accordingly ordered, and all the cups and spoons rattled immediately under Mr. Tymmons's ears, till they produced the desired effect, and he was wide awake, as every attorney ought to be. This enabled him to look over some bills, and while he was billing, Mr. Hoskins was cooing, which delightful amusement lasted till nine o'clock, at which hour Miss Mac Scew invariably left "the festive scene," for, as she justly observed, in houses where there was no supper, there was no use in staying any longer, as it was only leading Sally into the temptation of burning a rushlight, as no servant could be trusted to sit by the fire-light alone. Accordingly at nine o'clock Alonso appeared with lantern, clogs, and umbrella, and flanked by the obsequious Peter, Miss Mac Screw was escorted back to Lavender-lane.

Scarcely had she left the house, before Miles Datchet, (who had taken leave of the Lees, Mrs. Stokes, and even Madge, during which last ceremony he had caught Freddy Flipps grinning over a hedge, and for which he had bestowed upon him a parting drubbing, with a benedictory prophecy that he would yet ride a horse foaled by an acorn,) (1) called for Mr. Tymmons's despatches to Lord De Clifford and his mother, as he (Datchet) was to start for the Continent early on the following morning, where it is high time we should follow him.

(1) Come to the gallows.

CHAPTER XVIII.

To-night in Venice we have placed our scene.

GEORGE COLMAN'S *Epilogue to Clementina*.

There is a gloom in deep love as in deep water: there is a silence in it which suspends the foot; and the folded arms and the dejected head are the images it reflects. No voice shakes its surface.—WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

Now, since we are alone, let us examine
The question which has long disturb'd my mind
With doubt——

It is a hidden secret

Which I must fathom.

P. B. SHELLEY.

In many ways does the full heart reveal
The presence of the love it would conceal.—COLERIDGE.

. I love thee, and I feel
That on the fountain of my heart a seal
Is set to keep its waters pure and bright
For thee—— P. B. SHELLEY.

There is a comfort in the strength of love;
'T will make a thing endurable, which else
Would upset the brain, or break the heart.—WORDSWORTH.

Oh! none but gods have power their love to hide.—MARLOWE.

THE day at length dawned, upon the evening of which Madame d'A.'s long-talked-of and, by some, long-wished-for masquerade was to take place. Fanny and Saville, as every one knew, (at least every one of their own party,) were to figure as the knave and queen of hearts in the pack of living cards. The Dowager Lady De Clifford had announced it as her intention to go as Queen Elizabeth; consequently her eldest son immediately fixed upon Lord Leicester, while the amiable Herbert resolved upon personating the less-favoured but more intellectual Sir Walter Raleigh; especially as he knew his exemplary parent required a cloak upon all occasions, he determined to have one ready. Major Nonplus meant to astonish the natives by appearing in all the blue cloth and gold lace dignity of an English parish beadle. Mrs. Seymour had resolved upon going as Domenichino's Sibyl; for, to say nothing of a very beautiful face much resembling it, she had a very beautiful scarlet Delhi scarf, which was the very thing for the turban. Her sposo had not yet returned from Padua, so no one knew in what character he intended to go. Poor Monsieur Barbouiller, much against his will, had been teased into going; so, after some trouble, a little glue, a quantity of quills, and a large skin of black kid, he turned into a very respectable, but somewhat overgrown, porcupine. Mowbray had tried by every possible means to find out what Lady De Clifford intended to assume; for he knew that ever since his unlucky speech that day at dinner in Milan, she had relinquished her original design of going as Johan-

na, Queen of Naples. Even to the servants had he applied in vain—servants who, in general, act by their employers' secrets as the reeds did when Midas's barber whispered the mystery of his ass's ears to the earth—tell them to the whole world. The fact was, that Julia shrank from assuming any character, lest it might give him an opportunity of adopting a *pendant* to it, and so facilitate an *éclaircissement*, which of all things on earth she most dreaded; for she felt that it would bring about that crisis which must separate them for ever. That time, she felt, would come but too soon, and she might ward it off by keeping things as they were. Vain delusion! who ever yet succeeded, by shutting the eyes of their heart, in lulling it to sleep? She resolved, therefore, to wear a plain blue domino, and told Beryl to put very thick lace to the curtain of her mask, and not to let even her sister know what she intended to go in.

Mowbray, thus foiled at every point, determined to assume the dignity of mystery on his own account, and having secured the dress of a Carthusian friar, told his servant he should not want him at dressing-time, much to the disappointment of Mr. Sandford, who felt greatly hurt at this unpardonable want of confidence on the part of his master, and could only console himself by telling all the couriers, ladies'-maids, and valets, at dinner, that *his gentleman's* dress would be the most splendid and handsomest at the ball that night; but though *he* had had a great deal of trouble in arranging it, no earthly power should get him to tell what it was, as Mr. Mowbray wished it kept a profound secret, and, let other people do what they would, he never told anything his master did not wish to have known—when he did not know it himself.

The morning was sultry in the extreme, and every one seemed unable to move off the sofa, except Major Nonplus, who was rehearsing his rôle for the evening in his beadle's dress, running about like an armadillo, fussing and fidgeting every one.

Herbert Grimstone had left the room in disgust, for he had given Monsieur Barbouiller his pamphlet "On the Present Administration" to read, begging that he would make any marginal remarks that struck him. Now all that did strike him was the extreme arrogance and egotism of the whole affair; consequently, the only remarks he had made were wherever such sentences occurred as "This in *my* opinion was the only measure to save the country, and this the ministers carried;" or, "*My* opinion of the Irish appropriation clause was expressed under another administration, and that opinion is now borne out by the conduct of the present ministry, though *their* opinions were decidedly adverse to it when out of office, which proves what *I* have ever asserted—that is, that the Whigs are the only sound, true, liberal, and enlightened legislators, for they *know* that *change* is the quintessence of all

reform ; and as far as measures (not men) go, they are continually acting upon that knowledge." All the remarks, then, that Monsieur Barbouiller made, were to irradiate the personal pronoun in every such sentence with a glory round it, to the no small amusement of Fanny and Saville, who declared he would get up an opposition pamphlet, and present it to him that night at the ball ; and retiring for the purpose of writing it, Fanny was left alone with Mowbray and her sister, who was embroidering the last letter of the motto on Lord Leicester's garter, and whom the former, in spite of herself, was making die with laughter at a *scena* she had got up of the supposed virgin demeanour of the dowager queen, and the amatory devotion of her two courtier sons. Fanny was in the midst of an imaginary speech of the mimic queen to Lord Leicester about his *head* and *hort*, when Lord De Clifford himself entered, and hearing Mowbray's laugh, and seeing Fanny in the middle of the room, with her hands out like his illustrious mother, he said, folding his arms, putting his head back and drawing in, and biting his upper lip, as was his wont when he wanted to be ultra dignified, "As usual, Miss Neville, at your buffoonery, I suppose. If there is one thing more low and degrading than another, and more a proof of imbecility of mind, it is that turn for mimicry which you are eternally indulging in."

"I must say," said Fanny, bowing to this complimentary speech, "that *l'eau benite de la cour* of the Elizabethan age is not quite so sweet, my lord of Leicester, as that of our own."

"Never mind, Miss Neville," said Mowbray ; "I have observed that persons who cannot themselves mimic have no toleration for, but a great dread of, those who can ; however, you have some good authorities with you : is it not Percival who says, 'Parody is a favourite flower both of ancient and modern literature ; its ludicrous properties derive their wit from association, and never fail to produce admiration and delight, when it unites taste in selection with felicity of application ; even licentious specimens of it move to laughter ; for we are always inclined to be diverted with mimicry, or ridiculous imitation, whether the original be an object of respect or indifference, or even of contempt.' Recollect, too, that a polished Athenian audience heard, with bursts of mirthful applause, even the discourses of their favourite Socrates burlesqued upon the stage. These 'wise saws,'" concluded Mowbray, laughing, "may perhaps console you for more 'modern instances' of disapprobation."

"I'm not quite sure that they will," said Fanny, "for there was a great deal of truth in Hogarth's answer to the young lady who said she envied him his powers of caricaturing."

"What was that ?" asked Mowbray.

"Why, that the sense of the ridiculous had destroyed for him

the beautiful, for that in the face of an angel he could not help detecting something to caricature. It is for the same reason that one never can sympathise with an habitual sneerer, however affectingly and beautifully some of the thoughts may be expressed. I feel this in a peculiar degree with Voltaire. One cannot even be sure that he felt it when he wrote *Zaïre, vous pleurez!* and this doubt makes one almost check one's own tears as they rise."

"That is a very profound remark of yours," replied Mowbray, "for there is a depth in all truth, which nothing but sincerity can extract. Even dogs can detect real from affected sorrow or anger, and sympathise with the former, as much as they neglect and pay no attention to the latter."

"Really, Miss Fanny," said Major Nonplus, perpetrating a pirouette, while he flourished his beadle's staff over her head, "I should be quite unhappy if you were my daughter; for they say, so young, and yet so wise, never live long."

"Pardon me," said Mowbray, smiling, "not that I would for a moment set Cicero's authority against *yours*; but you know the proverb he quotes in his book *De Senectute*. I mean,

"Maturè fias senex, si diu senex esse velis."

"Oh! if you begin with your classics, I'm off," said the major, "for I never had any penchant for the ancients, male or female. Ha! ha! ha!—but don't tell Mrs. N. this when you see her," added he, with his finger at the side of his nose, as he made his exit.

"Isn't that d——d garter finished yet?" said Lord De Clifford gruffly, as he folded a note he had been writing during the foregoing conversation; Mademoiselle D'Antoville would have done it in half the time."

"It is a pity you did not give it to her to do, then," said Fanny indignantly, "as her sister left the room, with tears coursing each other down her cheeks as she placed the piece of embroidery upon the table, which her lord and master took up, and departed through another door.

"What superior beings your sex are—are they not, Mr. Mowbray?" asked Fanny ironically, as the door closed on her brutal brother-in-law.

"They are superior brutes, when they set about it, certainly," said Mowbray, as he and Fanny went up stairs together to their respective rooms.

That night the lights flitted from room to room, and from corridor to corridor, in Il Leone Bianco—and

"Within the surface of the fleeting river,
The wrinkled image of the city lay
Immovably unquiet."

The last gondola had rowed away with every one but Lord and Lady De Clifford; and Mowbray, who, knowing that the latter must pass through the drawing-room on her way down stairs, as her bedroom was within it, concealed himself behind a curtain, in the deep recess of one of the windows, that he might ascertain what her dress was. There did not appear to be a soul left in the hotel; for the master and mistress of it, with all the servants, had been invited by Madame de A.'s domestics to go and see the ball. Lord De Clifford had confided "the Virgin Queen" to the gallantry of Sir Walter Raleigh, while he lingered behind to console his dear Amy, or rather his *bien aimée*, in the school-room, before he joined the brilliant pageant. Poor Julia was still sitting before her toilet, with a heavy heart, and her mask on, listening for the last footsteps to recede, that she might not encounter Mowbray, when the door was unceremoniously opened, and her husband entered, glittering and sparkling in the magnificent dress of Lord Leicester.

"How kind of you," said Julia, springing forward, "to come and let me see you before you went! Your dress is really beautiful; and how well you have put on the garter," continued she, stooping down to look at it.

"D—n it!" cried he with an impatient stamp of the foot, "I can't stand here all night for you to look at me as if I was a puppet-show. I want those last books that came from Paris for Mademoiselle D'Antoville. I think, poor thing, as she is up there by herself, you might have thought of offering them to her, only you never do anything that you ought to do."

"They are over there," said Lady De Clifford, rather haughtily, pointing to an opposite chiffonnier, with one of her small, white, delicately beautiful hands.

"D——n you, madam," said her tyrant, "what do you mean by speaking to me in that tone?" and as he spoke, he inflicted a blow upon the extended hand, so violent and sudden, and the pain of which was so intense, that poor Julia uttered a faint shriek.

"That's right, madam, make a scene, do, and let all the world know how ill-used you are; why do n't you ring the bell for your maid, to come and see what a suffering angel her mistress is? I tell you what it is, madam, if you do n't wash your face and dry your tears, and go to that d——d ball directly as becomes *my* wife, without any further fuss, I'll find some means of bringing you to your senses."

So saying, he walked to the chiffonnier, took the books, and quitted the room through the passage door by which he had entered.

Suffering as she was both in body and mind, still the habit of obedience and fear was so strong upon her, that poor Julia took

off her mask, walked over to a basin, and plunged her face into cold water ; but, in trying to replace the mask, she found she was unable to raise her right hand ; the wrist was out of joint, and swollen to a painful degree. She would gladly have gone to bed, but then Berryl and all the servants were out ; there was no one to undress her, and with her hand in that helpless state it was impossible even to make an attempt at undressing herself ; it glanced across her mind that Mademoiselle D'Antoville was upstairs, but she recoiled from the idea of asking her to do anything for her, with a feeling of sickening disgust.

“ Yes,” said she, “ I must go to that horrid ball ; if I can but bear the pain, the loose sleeve of my domino will hide my hand, and I must only hold my mask with the other hand till I can find some one to tie it.” Having come to this decision, she opened the drawing-room door : it was a dark, lofty, spacious apartment, (like all the Venetian rooms,) at the moment partially and dimly lit by a pair of candles on the high antique mantel-piece, and one solitary Roman lamp on the table. The chains of the lamp, as well as the flame, were blowing about from the draught that came from the casement, and what added to the gloom was the solemn stillness—only broken in upon by the faint and phantomlike echoes of the plashing oars of every passing gondola.

Lady De Clifford had got half across the room, when Mowbray, anxious to be sure that it was her, leant forward in his ambush to try and see her face, before which, however, she held her mask. The move he had made caused a slight rustling against the curtain. Nervous and ill before, this mysterious noise, added to the sepulchral gloom of the room, completely subdued her already over-excited frame, and tottering towards a sofa, she sank fainting and exhausted upon it, the mask falling at the same time from her lifeless hand. Shall we confess it ? This scene, which at any other time, or rather in the presence of any third person, would have driven Mowbray to distraction between grief and fear, now produced but one feeling, that of unmixed happiness. There lay before him, helpless and unconscious, all that he loved on earth ; there might he pour out unchecked, unchided, all the deep-hoarded, pent-up, burning love which had been preying upon his heart so long—there lay that worshipped and unapproachable being at his mercy, the slightest touch of whose hand had been more than he had dared to aspire to. And what were the resolves of this man of honour—with most men falsely so called ? “ *Si leonini pellis non satis est, assuenda vulpina,*”—is their invariable motto upon all occasions. Was it Mowbray's ? Let him answer for himself. He sprang from his concealment, he knelt beside that senseless form, he bent over those pale cold features as though their spirit had fled, and, by looking, he would have gazed his own into them :

he approached the slightly parted and beautiful lips, but their silent eloquence prevailed.

“Yes, sweet soul,” said he, retreating, that pure and angel spirit, which ever hovers round and guards you, shall be obeyed. I will not rob you; ’t would be a paltry triumph to take that which you would never give. Good God!” exclaimed he, “well may she say all men are selfish—here am I actually feasting upon, revelling in her misery! I ought to get some water to revive her;” but here a fresh paroxysm of selfishness and self-delusion came over him, and he added, “it will be better to rub her hands.” And raising the loose sleeve of her domino, her swollen, drooping, and blackening right hand met his view. “Good heavens!” said he, “can that monster De Clifford have done this? I heard his hated voice speaking angrily in the next room, and I thought—but then that was too dreadful—that I heard her scream. Julia! my Julia! yes, mine in spite of them all! only look at me, speak to me, tell how this happened!”—and as he tried to get the rings off her fingers which were now visibly swelling too, his kisses and tears, which deluged her hand, from the pain they occasioned, seemed to bring her back to a sort of half consciousness.

“No! Berryl, no!” murmured she, putting her left arm round Mowbray’s neck, and leaning her head against his, “it was an accident, but bind up my wrist and get me to bed—I’m ill, very ill.” As she spoke, the arm which had encircled Mowbray fell lifelessly beside her, and her head sank back on the pillow. Mowbray now loosened the domino about her throat, and opened it to give her a little more air: in doing so, he perceived a very slight Venitian chain; he drew it out, and attached to it was the little purple enamel watch he had given young Julia. He touched the spring mechanically, the watch opened, and a white leaf dropped out: he raised it, thinking it might be a bit of paper that the child had placed there; but, on examining it, it proved to be the dried leaf of a water-lily, folded, and in small rose-coloured letters were painted on it the day and hour he had plucked it at Como.

“By heavens, she loves me!” cried he exultingly, as he kissed and replaced the silent tell-tale. He felt that upon this conviction he could live for years without even betraying it to her, much less encroaching on it, by asking or hoping more—nay, more he could not have borne; he felt as if it would have been sacrilege to let any subsequent joy disperse or even blend with the intense, the unalloyed happiness of that moment; for there are feelings on the mysterious altars of the heart, so subtle, so holy, so impalpably delicate, that the realities that rivet, destroy them like the fairy hues on some rare flowers: too beautiful to last, they perish at the touch. At that moment, had Julia been conscious of his presence, Mowbray would not have asked her if she loved him;

even her voice, so loved—so soft—which for him had a haunting charm,

“ Like the voiceless words
Of the flowers and the birds,”

would have dispelled the Elysium that then filled his heart, for he felt that the whole book of fate did not contain such another leaf for him as that of the faded lily he had just found. A few moments more he gave to letting his new-found happiness take root in his heart; and then, seeing no chance of recovering Julia without medical assistance, he gently placed some chairs by the side of the sofa, to prevent her falling in case she revived before his return, and locked her bed-room door from without, first writing upon a slip of paper, “Berryl, Lady De Clifford is very ill, return immediately.” Then, to prevent the possibility of any intruder, he locked the drawing-room door, and, hurrying down the stairs, went out at the back of the house, and ran along the narrow streets, till he reached the *Chiesa del Redentore*, a few doors from which he found a surgeon, who, seeing Mowbray’s pale agitated face, and at first from his dress mistaking him for a capuchin, exclaimed, “Cosa stupenda! avra avuto forse qualche terrore, mio padre?”

Mowbray explained to him as briefly as possible that an English lady at Il Leone Bianco had been suddenly taken ill through meeting with an accident, and putting her wrist out of joint, and urged him to make all possible speed, almost dragging the poor doctor along as he spoke. In his eagerness his hood had fallen off, and discovered his crisp, curling, dark hair, Achilles-like head, and handsome face, as unlike a monk’s as need be, to say nothing of the perfections of his mouth and teeth, which differed widely from any member’s of that worthy fraternity. At sight of such a handsome cavaliero, a light seemed to break upon the doctor, whom Mowbray would hardly give time to collect his bandages and necessary implements, exclaiming every moment, “Andiamo, partiamo! Signor Dottore;” whereupon the doctor whistled out, with a Figaro nod of the head, “Chi ha amor nel petto ha le sprone ne i fianchi.”

At length the doctor’s cloak was on, and they had just gained the threshold of the door, when a stout brown damsel, with a voice like a peacock, came screaming after the poor Esculapius, to tell him that he would lose his supper, which was quite ready; but the only notice he took of this was the rather ungracious one of “Tace, tace, Biondetta, tre donne e un occa fan un mercato.” Embarking at the nearest canal, Mowbray told the gondoliers to row with all speed to the Palazzo Barberigo, (which Madame de A. had hired,) in order that he might get the note conveyed to Berryl, and then proceeded as quickly as possible to Il Leone Bianco. On arriving he hurried up stairs before the doctor, so as

to unlock the drawing-room door: the noise he made in doing so roused Lady De Clifford, who moved slightly.

"Come in, doctor," said Mowbray. "What do you think had better be done? She appears to have been insensible ever since I went for you, and all her family being at this ball of Madame de A.'s, I am doubly anxious about this poor lady."

"Sicuro," said the doctor, with a half smile, as he proceeded to feel Lady De Clifford's pulse; and then, shaking his head, asked for some eau de Cologne and other restoratives. Mowbray flew to his dressing-room for them, and when he returned found that Julia began to evince symptoms of returning animation. Her brow was slightly contracted, as if from the pain occasioned her by pressing her wrist; a faint murmur escaped her lips. Mowbray bent down to listen to what she was trying to say, and distinctly heard the words, "Dear Mowbray!" Totally forgetting that the poor doctor did not understand one word of English, and that if he had, he would not have known who Mowbray was, he turned to him and said—"She is asking for her maid; and—and—she is not come yet."

"Well, well," replied the doctor, "you take her left hand and rub the palm of it, while I bandage up the other."

Mowbray almost wished that she would not revive, that his occupation might continue. Soon, however, she opened her eyes, and looked vacantly at him and then at the doctor; at length she started wildly up, and looking round, put her hand to her head, and said, "Where am I?"

"Here—at home—in the drawing-room," said Mowbray gently. "Dear Lady De Clifford, you have been very ill," continued he, his voice trembling with emotion; "you have met with some terrible accident; and—and—sprained your wrist, I believe; so I went for a doctor to look at it—and this is he."

"You went for a doctor!" said Julia, straining back her hair, and looking wildly at Mowbray, and who—when—I mean where is my child—where is my sister—where are they all? and why am I here with you alone? In mercy tell me what has happened;" and she flung herself frantically on her knees before him.

"O God! this is too much!" said Mowbray, lifting her on the sofa; "do be calm, dearest Lady De Clifford, and I will tell you everything. They are at the ball—Madame de A.'s ball. We were all going. You hurt your wrist in some way or other, and fainted, I suppose, from the pain. Happening to pass through the room at the time, I found you in a state of insensibility, and went for this man; that is all, upon my honour; but take care of your hand—you see it has been bandaged."

"O yes! I remember," said she, with a slight shudder, looking at her hand; "you are ver—very good, Mr. Mowbray. I am shocked

to have given you so much trouble; but pra—pray do n't let me detain you from the ball."

"Till your maid (whom I have sent for) comes, you certainly must detain me," replied he, coldly, "and then I will rid you of my presence."

"Rid me!" repeated Julia, raising her eyes, filled with tears, to his—"do forgive me, and do n't think me ungrateful."

"Not unless angels are so," said Mowbray; and then turning quickly round to the doctor, who was steeping lint in eau de Cologne at the table, asked him what he thought the signora had best take. Whereupon that worthy man advanced with a scientific shrug, and again feeling Lady De Clifford's pulse, put the usual Italian medical query, whether about a broken neck or a scratched finger—

"Avrebbe 'ella forse fatto una caduta, signora?"

Lady De Clifford answered, "No—that she had had no fall."

At which the doctor again shrugged his shoulders, and raised his eyebrows, and saying he would send her some leeches for her hand, and a composing draught for herself, turned to Mowbray to ask the lady's name to whom they were to be sent; and the latter having written it on a piece of paper, the doctor took leave, promising to call early in the morning. The door closed, and Julia and Mowbray were again alone. A few moments' perfect silence ensued, which Lady De Clifford was the first to break.

"I am sure," said she, hesitatingly, "I have much to thank you for. Will you forgive all the trouble I have occasioned you? I—I—am quite well now; and pray do n't let me detain you any longer—here—away—that is, from the ball, I mean," added she, extending her hand to Mowbray, and making an effort to rise as she spoke.

"Julia!" cried he, seizing her proffered hand, and kneeling passionately before her, "all disguise is useless—the veil is rent—the idol has revealed its own mysteries—the dense masses of doubt—of danger—ay, and of duty, that concealed them, have crumbled around us, and the immutable truth has flooded my soul with a divine light, that neither time nor eternity can shadow nor extinguish.

"Julia, *you love me!* Nay, tremble not, nor turn from me. Yes, *you love me!*—dear, dear words! It is your heart and not your lips, which have pronounced them. That heart, which, in spite of yourself, is mine, will not, cannot conceal its minutest pulsation from me; and surely, mine has not been in your possession so long, without convincing you that no other ever yet beat with the same devotion, the same truth, the same purity of worship, towards any human being. I know all that you would say, and that others would suspect; for I know the fatal, the insurmountable barrier that exists between us; but is it because one shrine is richer than any other, that we cannot kneel at it without being suspected of

sacrilege? Were you like other women, I might love you with the ordinary love of men—if that more than brute selfishness, which destroys while it degrades, deserves that sacred name; but the moment I respected you less, should I love you less, think you, then?”

“O God!” cried Julia, struggling to release her hand, “have mercy on me. If you indeed love me, release me. You know I must not, ought not, to listen to such language from any human being. I know not what accident may have revealed to you my guilty, my unpardonable weakness! Despise me. I fear you must; but pity while you despise.”

“Julia!” said Mowbray, solemnly, releasing her hand, “why degrade yourself by talking of guilt! Do you think that the great God is a just or an unjust Being? Has he made any grammatical distinctions in the Decalogue? Has he said to man, thou shalt commit such and such sins, and to woman, thou shalt not? And if man, who is in the daily habit of violating the most sacred and explicit of God’s commandments, still hopes for mercy, shall woman be put beyond the pale of redemption, for a mere feeling which is involuntary?”

“Certainly not,” said Julia; “I firmly believe, that however custom, and the laws they themselves make, may absolve men for the violation of God’s commandments in this world, they will have to give a strict and fearful account in the next. Yet sin in others is no excuse for sin in ourselves. Did we merely owe duty towards man, there would be nothing sacred or binding in our obligations. And their great enormities might palliate, while they provoked, lesser ones in us; but upon the first and faintest dawning of every sin, above all those ‘gainst which the Almighty has set his canon,’ let us ask our hearts, with the pure and obedient Hebrew captive, ‘Can I do this, and commit this great sin against God?’ for, depend upon it, this self-interrogation is our only safeguard, as it can be our only standard of right and wrong.”

“And think you,” replied Mowbray, mournfully, “that I would wish or ask you to sin against that God in whom my whole trust for you is placed? Ah Julia! you little know the nature and depth of what I feel for you, or you would know that my almost every thought of you is a prayer; for angels themselves are not purer than the feelings you inspire. Your sorrows alone would make you sacred in my eyes. Had you been happy, I might have been wretch enough to have attempted the destruction of that happiness; but as it is, the foul fiend himself would shrink from injuring you. Your friend none can blame nor prevent my being. I know how suspicious the title sounds, when it is adopted by a lover; but there is a friendship which is love; in everything but passionate vows, caprice, and inconstancy; and such you shall find mine for

you, Julia. This night has been the crisis of my—of our fate; and it has been dark and starless till now. When the moon is rising gloriously, see how it floods that wide waste of waters, brightening even the dark and deathlike burdens it bears upon its bosom. And now its rays fall upon the wings of the diamond dove in your hair, and they actually seem to flutter and hover over you. Be this unto us as an omen and a promise of brighter, happier hours.'

And again Mowbray knelt before her; and as he covered her hand (which she no longer withheld) with kisses, their tears fell hot and fast, and mingled as they fell.

"But that poor hand," said he, "tell me, was it, could it have been that monster De Clifford who struck you?"

Julia turned away her head, and made no answer.

"Ah! I see how it is," said he, "*chi tace confessa*. Good heavens! what are some men made of!"

"Do," said Julia, in order to change the subject, "go to Madame de A.'s. Indeed I am much, much better now; and thank you a thousand times for the care you have taken of me. Do, dear friend, go."

"Bless you for those words," cried Mowbray, "and never, never shall you find me unworthy of so enviable a title; but indeed I will not, cannot, leave you till your maid comes; then I will go—for, for your sake I ought to be seen at that horrid ball. You need not, however, dread my remaining, for my heart is too full to say more to-night; but, O Julia! to-morrow I will try and convince you that all men are not wholly and solely actuated by motives of selfishness." As he finished speaking, he walked over to the table and poured out a glass of water; while he was drinking it, a knock came to the door.

"Come in," said Lady De Clifford, and Berryl entered in the greatest possible state of trepidation.

"Good *evens*, my Lady, what *as appened*?" exclaimed she, "for I left you quite well and ready dressed, and I got this slip of paper, saying your ladyship was took suddenly *hill*; and I should have been here sooner, but Madam *Hangelique*, the Countess's maid, tried to persuade me, *hin* her broken *Henglish*, that it was only a masquerading hoax of the Count's *valley* that gave me the paper; but though I saw plenty of blue dominos, they had none of them your air, my lady, so I come away—for all they could say to me. And I hope your ladyship hain't been very *hill*."

"No, only an accident, Berryl. I put my wrist out of joint and fainted from the pain, and Mr. Mowbray, who happened to pass through the room, saw me, and was good enough to go for a doctor, who has bandaged it up, and I dare say it will soon be well."

Berryl, who now for the first time perceived Mowbray, drop-

ped him a low curtsey, with an "I beg your pardon, sir, I did 'nt *hobserve* you before. Was her ladyship long in the faintin fit?"

"Not very long," replied he, "and Doctor Pozzo is to send some leeches for her hand, and a composing draught to be taken on going to bed."

"Let me look at your hand, my lady," said Berryl; and then shaking her head, she muttered, "*haccident* indeed! No, but more of that wretch's *andy* work."

"I'm sure," said Lady De Clifford, turning to Mowbray, and anxious to prevent Berryl saying anything further, "I have a thousand apologies to make for detaining you so long from the ball."

"Not at all," said he, in a tone of commonplace gallantry; "I'm too happy if I have been of the slightest use;" and then added in a still more careless tone, turning to Berryl, "I do n't suppose I have lost much of the spectacle—have I?"

"No, sir, not much, only the game with the living cards, which was very beautiful and *curus*, the way they were *hall* shuffled, and cut, and dealt three times over, and each time *Mussue* de Rivoli, who is the knave of spades, you know, sir, contrived always to get next Miss Neville, and then there was great laughing, and Major Nonplus would come up and insist upon fair play, and their being dealt over again."

"And how do Queen Elizabeth and her court get on?" asked Mowbray smiling.

"O *p'raps* it's very wrong of me to say, sir, and a servant may have no business to make remarks, but I should say it was quite *ridiclus*—*hevery* one was laughing, especially when the French gentleman that went as the Hedge-hog caught the old lady's ruff in one of his quills; and then Sir Something Sally, that's Mr. Herbert, you know sir, drew his sword, but the hedge hog poking his quills in his eyes, he was glad to make his escape, and then how the people did laugh, to be sure! but some of the dresses are most *helegant* and splendid, certainly."

"Well, you really make me long to see it all," said Mowbray, smiling; and then turning to Julia, and holding out his hand, added, "and as I think I must rather be in your way than otherwise, I'll now wish you good-night, my dear Lady De Clifford, sincerely hoping that you may feel no bad effects from your accident by to-morrow; and I'm sure I can't leave you in better or more careful hands than Mrs. Berryl's."

"That's what I call a real gentleman," said the latter, as Mowbray closed the door after him; "but how Mr. Sandford could go and tell every one that his dress was the most splendid thing that ever was seen, unless he wanted to mystify us all, I'm sure I cannot conceive; but it is no great matter, for such a *andsome* man

looks well in anything, while all the velvet and jewels in the world won't make some people look even passable."

Leaving Julia to the care of Berryl, we will follow Mowbray. When he got into his gondola to go to the Palazzo Barberigo, the sea was no longer dark, but like a sheet of diamond water from the light of the bright moon above it, and everything looked and sounded happier than when he had floated over it an hour or two before; and as he landed at the terrace of the palazzo, a boat passed, in which a very sweet voice, that seemed to rise from the waters, was singing the barcarola "*Or che in Cielo*," from the Marino Faliero. This had scarcely passed, before another bark glided by, with an apparently happier party, who were singing most exquisitely that beautiful terzetto from Otello, "*Ti parli l'amore*." Mowbray lingered on the steps, and joined in it, till he felt a hand upon his shoulder, and heard a voice exclaim, (which he instantly recognised as Saville's,) "No doubt, holy father, '*ti parli l'amore*' is your form of absolution when confessing a pretty novice; but now tell me, in plain English, what makes you so late?"

"I have been here some time," stammered Mowbray.

"Then I hope you saw how well we played our cards?"

"Yes—no—that is, it was so hot, I did not go into the house—yet, in fact, just as I was coming away, poor Lady De Clifford was taken very ill, and nobody being left in the house, I had to go for a doctor, which detained me; in short (but don't tell her sister, at least to-night, for it would only make her unhappy, and do no good,) her husband gave her a blow on her hand that put her wrist out of joint, and she fainted from the pain."

"Brute!" exclaimed Saville; "how I long to kick that man! and I shall have to do it at last."

"Pray resign in my favour," said Mowbray, "whenever the opportunity occurs; but how is this—I left you the knave of hearts, and now I find you an English sailor?"

"A distinction without a difference, perhaps you think," said Saville; "but my black-eyed Susan is waiting for me, and I have a squib to give that illustrious member of the British senate, Mr. Herbert Grimstone; so *addio, mio caro!*" saying which, he darted off, leaving Mowbray to choose what path he liked.

As he advanced into the garden, he found it brilliantly illuminated, with groups of gorgeously-dressed people representing different scenes, eras, and epochs in Italian history; and one end of the garden, in especial, presented a scene of dazzling splendour, being fitted up as the Piazzo di San Marco, representing that magnificent festival given on the defeat of the rebels, and the end of the Candian war, the splendour of which Petrarch complained of being unable to find an adequate Latin name for. There sat, in the mimic marble gallery over the porch, the Doge, with his princely

train, sheltered by golden canopies ; Petrarch on his right alone, and the four-and-twenty noble Venetian youths headed by a Ferrarese ; then came the group of English barons, (some of the blood-royal, as Petrarch described them,) and the flashing of bright eyes, and crimsoning of soft cheeks, amid the waving of white plumes and the glittering of costly jewels ;—altogether the scene was one of fairy-like enchantment, but too gay and buoyant to accord with the dreamy but melancholy happiness of Mowbray's mind that night ; so he lingered but a moment, and walked silently on till he reached the house ; he entered the vestibule just as Saville (whom he knew by his dress, in spite of a very good and characteristic mask) was presenting a scroll of paper to Sir Walter Raleigh, whom he accosted after the following manner :—

“ You be a parliament-man now : well, nobody 'll ever be the better for that ; howsomdever, I wish as how you 'd just present this here petition the next time parliament's *rerogued*, for I know it's *prorogued* at present. Now mind, my hearty, if you don't, it's all up with you at your next *'lection*—I tell ee so, and I'm a Triverton man ; and I ha'n't been aboard an English man o' war so long without knowing something about unfurling *canvass*, d'ye see ? *Whoy*, you're sadly gone down in the world as you've got on in it ; for when she was on her reign (pointing to his mother, who was leaning on his arm) you did some good, for you brought *baccy* into England : so put that into your pipe and smoke it, as Muster Hume says in his History of England.”

“ My dear,” said the Dowager Lady De Clifford to her son, moving onward, “ this is vaustly disagreeable to be beset by such vulgar people ; throw away that paper that horrid man gave you.”

“ O, my dear mamma, all these sort of things are the life of a masquerade, and we may find some fun in this when we get home.”

“ Please your most gracious Majesty,” said Major Nonplus, dragging *ex officio* an unfortunate youth by the collar—“ here is a vagrant that has been lately shooting over your Majesty's royal demesne of Blichingly, in ——shire, come to crave your highness's pardon.”

“ Who is it ?” whispered her Majesty to Sir Walter Raleigh, pointing to a threadpapery-looking neither man nor boy, dressed as Master Slender.

“ O, Lord Charles Dinely, Lord Shuffleton's youngest son, who has just left Harrow, and is here with his tutor ; and if you remember, my dear mamma, you were kind enough to say that I might ask him to shoot at Blichingly, whenever he was in the neighbourhood.”

“ O, ah ! true, my dear, I'm vaustly glad he's here, for I'll ask him about my plantation near the labyrinth, as he has been so

recently at Blichingly." So saying, she graciously turned to the lordling, who had a vast deal of unlicked cubbism about him, and said—

"I hope your lordship had good sport at Blichingly."

"Pretty fair ; but all the keepers confoundedly stupid."

"Did your lordship" (his lordship was just seventeen)—"did your lordship see the new plantation?"

"Yes."

"Were the alders and birch trees coming on?"

"'Pon my honour, I don't know, for I'm no arborologist; only know, that when I left Harrow, *birch was deucedly backward.*"

At the conclusion of this brilliant sally, Lord Charles turned upon his heel with a horse-laugh, and left the poor dowager lamenting her unusual waste of civility.

Weary of all around him, Mowbray left the hall and wandered up stairs, till he came to the room in which Titian died; it was deserted, save by his pictures of the Magdalene and the Venetian senator, and it might be haunted by the spirit of him that painted them. Mowbray flung himself upon a couch, and gazing upon the deep and mournful beauty of the face before him, which looked as if to it had also been said, "Her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much," a train of sweet and bitter thoughts came over him, and he wept like a child; he put his hand into his bosom for a handkerchief; the one he drew out seemed as if it had been stolen from the wardrobe of Titania, so fine was its texture, and so delicately beautiful the point lace with which it was trimmed:—it was Lady De Clifford's he had taken by mistake, and it was still wet with her tears. "This at least," said he, "shall never leave me, all my thoughts be in it,

'Unless it be to think that she is by,

And feed upon the shadow of perfection.'"

Mowbray had scarcely replaced the handkerchief before Major Nonplus, staff in hand, stumped into the room.

"God bless me, Mowbray, is that you? had no idea you were here alone, or should have come to you before; hope you're not offended though—it's the way at these masks, you know—every one for themselves. Capital fun we've had to be sure, and through the whole of it, I assure you, I've kept English order and regularity, by keeping an eye upon them all; and as I told the young people, they may flirt as much as they like (for that's natural) in the rooms where there are plenty of lights and people, but no tête-à-têtes and dark walks, and that sort of thing. Well, I must say," continued he, mopping his face with a silk pocket handkerchief, which in colours and dimensions might have been mistaken for the union jack, "I must say, tho' I say it who should not say it, that I'm always trying to do for everybody."

"God knows you are," groaned Mowbray; and thinking this quintessence of bore might be diluted and neutralised by the crowd, he accepted his invitation to go down stairs. After remaining another half hour, and sauntering through the rooms without a mask, that every one might see that he was there, he was preparing to go as day was beginning to dawn, and all the people looking jaded, dusty, and ugly, between the invidious discoveries of the two lights, which were unnaturally turning against their own—the real light making all that was real look bad, and the artificial light making all that was artificial look worse. Just as Mowbray was leaving the room, he was riveted by Queen Elizabeth's dulcet accents, accosting Lord Charles Dinely as follows:—

"When your lordship returns to England, I hope you will shoot at Blichingly whenever you please, for the greatest pleasure we landed proprietors have is supplying our friends with game."

"O, I'm sure they can never want it while you're in the country," replied Lord Charles, with a clodpole bow and grin, which luckily her ladyship took for a compliment.

"Ah! Mowbray, how do?" said he, extending one finger, "you'll soon be a marquis, my boy, for when I left, your uncle, old Lord Cheveley, was expected to kick every minute; when it happens, do n't forget I've four sisters, one uglier than another, and you may have your choice of them; or if you prefer it, two cousins also, rather plain about the head. Where are you staying? Red Lion, eh? Silver Lion—what do they call it?"

"Yes," said Mowbray; "good-night, or rather morning, for it,

..... "like the spirit of a youth
That means to be of note, begins by times."

On getting into his gondola, the fresh sea breezes that played upon his cheek made him less inclined for sleep than ever. Upon reaching the hotel, he saw Berryl, and having ascertained that Julia had at length fallen asleep, not being able to follow her example, he sat down and wrote her the following letter.

"THE dreadful struggles which have taken place, dearest, between reason and my love for you, have so agitated and exhausted me, that were I to die for it to-morrow, I must write to you to-day. O Julia! what is there in your very name that I cannot even write it without my cheek kindling, and my heart glowing as if a 'scintilla dell' immortal fuoco' had, for the first time, fallen upon it, and filled it with the heaven from whence it came. Bear with me, then, while I, for the first and last time, link my soul, my fate, my name, with yours. Remember that your breath still lingers on my cheek, your touch still thrills in mine—our tears are not yet dried, and the bloom is still fresh upon every feeling. These are bad materials for a stoic; but down itself is capable of petrification. It has been said that

'Love's heroism is equal to all acts,
But seldom to forbearance.'

"He knew not love who said so, for love is not love that is not equal to all

things for the sake of what it loves ; and if forbearance be its test, it will know nought else. Julia, my life began when I knew you, therefore it would be needless to go back to a prior stage of my existence, were it not to give you some guarantee for the stability of my promises. The sort of mother a man has had may, generally speaking, be pretty correctly known by the estimate he entertains of her sex. There are two kinds of mothers, who invariably engender in their sons a respect and consideration for women ;—the one is the mother of superior intellect, properly evinced in the education of her children, and is even more solicitous in weeding than planting their dispositions ;—the other is one who, without many intellectual advantages, possesses that sort of moral pre-eminence and right-mindedness, which, proved by every act of her life, (for such persons seldom deal in aphorisms and fine sentiments,) induce her sons to believe, and rightly too, that a good woman is the best friend and counsellor that man, with all his boasted superiority, can have. My mother united both moral and intellectual pre-eminence, and my father dying when I was only six years old, and knowing that both rank and wealth awaited me, that exemplary woman devoted her life to endeavouring to make me not wholly unworthy of her and of them ; and if I often blush to think that her labour of love has produced no better or more abundant harvest, still I hope that some of the good seed has remained ; for never does an unworthy thought arise in my mind, that, if filtered through the memory of my mother's care, does not become purer and better. To you I am not ashamed to own, that every night brings me back to my childhood, when I knelt at my mother's feet : I still feel her hand upon my head, and hear her blessing, when I have done nothing to forfeit it. To some this might appear puerile—I pity them—and am content that you are not of the number. Every day convinces me that both evil and good come with the understanding—how much of the latter (or *vice versa*) within the book of memory, does our reason translate to us, which, when we first heard it, was but as the meaningless sounds of an unknown language. I now know and feel the meaning of my mother's constant injunction to me—to be, and not to seem it, constitutes the only difference between virtue and vice ; for the former enables one to adhere on all occasions steadily and resolutely to the right path, the other is a straw in the wind, blown about in every quarter, as accident, inclination, or interest may direct. All mere seemers must be hypocrites, and, while they have a painful tenacity about their character, are not in the least particular as to their conduct, just as a prude cares infinitely more for her reputation than she does for her virtue. Think you, then, that in my conduct towards you, it is the world's opinion I either court or succumb to ? No—too well I know the 'perilous stuff,' the hollow echoes, the mean interests, and meaner ambitions that world is made of, which chooses its favourites, as the Romans did their generals, solely from being fortunate ; for the vice that revolts, and is unpardonable, when seen through rags, is concealed and becomes charming in velvet. Believe, then, that God and yourself are the sole directors of my conduct, the sole influencers of my motives. Shall I confess it ? when I first knew you, you were to me an enigma—at one moment I thought your placidity and endurance arose from that inane sort of apathy, which, happily for themselves, so many of your sex possess—again I attributed it to hatred, which is a strong endurer ; but then in hatred there is a buoyancy which bears one up upon the turbulent surface of defiance, and never permits one to ride at anchor on the calm of resignation ; of the former you appeared to know nothing, while of the latter you seemed perfect mistress. During this first vague and uncertain dawn of your character, I availed myself of the chartered corruption of society, and allowed myself to be in love with you ; but as the meridian splendour and cloudless purity of that character burst upon me—as I found that, like the great heathen's idea of the Deity, your whole nature was truth, and light was its shadow, and that your endurance of injuries and insults arose neither from the impotence of imbecility nor from the supernatural strength of hate, but from the highest and best motives which human

nature is capable of being subdued and impelled by—then, Julia, I loved you! How I struggled against that love, God and my own heart alone know; for I could not breathe the same atmosphere with you, without at least trying to become better—yes, my heart,

‘Like the dark web that whitens in the sun,
Grew pure from being purely shone upon;

and if love erected an altar on an unhallowed site, esteem consecrated and made it sacred; for those feelings which nature refused to make dumb, respect constrained into silence—a silence which never should have been broken but for the circumstances which occurred last night—and how was it broken then? Ah, Julia! was it not the voice of your own feelings that echoed through mine, and the sound you had yourself awakened terrified and appalled you! But be calm, for the echo has died away. Henceforth all shall be silent, though sleepless as before, and the rosy words on that dear lily I will try and remember only as the inscription on those of the statues of Isis, which shall haunt me with the mysterious sounds of—‘I am all that has been, that shall be, and none among mortals has hitherto taken off my veil.’

“To prove the sincerity of my resolution, I would leave you to-morrow, but that the scene of yesterday rushes back upon my memory, and I cannot divest myself of the painful yet delightful idea, that during this journey I may be again some slight protection and of some trifling use to you; and to leave you ill, deserted, and neglected, is more than I can, than I ought to do. Once in England, you will, at least, be within reach of your own family, and then, or perhaps before then, never will I knowingly obtrude myself into your presence; but I will not conceal from you, that a shudder comes over me, when I think there may be a crisis in your fate, too terrible, too overwhelming, for even you to bear up against. Yes, a moment may come, when your endurance, which is as a rock, and your virtue, which is as a beacon, may be wrecked in the dark treachery of an unexpected whirlpool.

“I know an instance, and only one, of a woman who had endured more, because she had loved more than you—and who was a better wife, because there was more scope for sacrifices and exertion in her lot than even in yours. Yes, Julia, that woman had loved her husband deeply and devotedly for years—had anticipated his every wish—concealed his every fault—promoted his every interest, real or imaginary—endured the violence of his temper, which vented itself in acts of personal brutality that, even by his own acknowledgment, amounted to madness—had writhed severely, but silently, under the interference, jealousies, and falsehoods of his family; nay, more, had played the Griselda, when her hearth and home had been polluted by the presence of his mistresses—(when of her own sphere of life)—and, in point of money, had left herself pennyless to supply his extravagance. All this she did, and all this she bore without a murmur for years, or without even letting her own mother guess at its existence; and on one occasion, when he had committed a personal outrage on her, of so sanguinary and brutal a nature that he left his house and wrote to her, saying, ‘that having eternally disgraced himself, he should fly the country, and announce ill health as the reason of his retirement from public life,’ she, generously but foolishly pitying this Lucifer spirit in his fall, who never knew pity for, or remorse about, his conduct to her, brought him back, forgave, and hushed up everything. But to be under such an obligation to a woman, and that woman his wife! was what his mean sordid nature could never brook; and from that moment he organised a deep-laid plot against his poor victim.

“He spent a whole year in looking out for a mistress, as he would for a house or a horse; and when he found one to his mind, (a low person, who, with her sisters, kept a school near a watering-place,) the next thing was to take a villa for his wife, so as to have London to himself. This done, finding utter neglect

not sufficient, and eternally telling her that they would be happier apart, he then spent six months in endeavouring to goad her into an open rupture, which, for the sake of her children, she was determined not be goaded into.

“One day, in especial, she implored him, with tears, to tell her what she had done to displease him, or could do to please him: not in reality being able to say, his only answer was, ‘*The fact is, I never shall be able to get anything out of my mother, as long as I am on terms with you!*’

“Against this there was of course no appeal. Time passed on, and having received his strict orders not to presume to go to London, which was within an hour’s drive, she did as she was desired; till one day, her amiable husband having announced his intention of honouring her with his company at dinner, she waited till nine o’clock, when one of his grooms brought a letter from him, stating that he was dangerously ill. His wife, believing this, set off for town, whereupon, arriving at his house thus unexpectedly, she found not the invalid she expected, but unequivocal proofs of her husband’s new and guilty *liaison*. Indignant and disgusted at the falsehood and wickedness of his whole conduct, she remained in town that night, and wrote him a letter, couched in pretty strong language, that is, calling him by the names he deserved—which, among the well-regulated portion of society, whose words are always irreproachable, let their deeds be what they may, is, I believe, considered an unpardonable offence in a wife.

“Now mark the sequel. Upon the receipt of this *violent letter*, the husband went to a very distant relative of his wife’s, (for, as he used to tell her in a manly and honourable manner, she had neither father nor brother, and therefore was completely in his power,) and to this relation he declared upon oath, (though the whole world knew to the contrary,) that it was false about his having a mistress; and that the violence of his wife’s temper made it impossible for him to live with her!—that he merely wished the separation to be temporary, as a short time might bring her to her senses. He then artfully proceeded to give her credit for every possible good quality—temper excepted—which was strange, as he had been for years in the habit of saying that he did not give her as much credit as others did, for the goodness and equanimity of her temper, as *he* considered it merely constitutional. However, it suited his purpose, at this juncture, that she should be a termagant, and, accordingly, such he declared her—adducing, as proofs of his assertion, the letters of an outraged and injured wife, who, after years of devotion and endurance, found, or rather knew herself, and her children, to be turned out of their home, to make way for an abandoned woman, and to save an adulterer the expense of two establishments. Of this *she* was at the time fully aware, and events have proved the truth of her information. But her relation, being a man of strict integrity and chivalric honour himself—though withal of a north-pole temperament, and a great respecter of the *commérage de société*, and cucumber *convenances* of marital authority, did not conceive that there could be any appeal from the solemn word of honour of a *soi-disant gentleman!* and therefore gave implicit credence to the husband’s statement; negotiating the whole business much after the fashion of the worthy Scotch professor, who, being disturbed in the solution of his problems by a company of cats that held a concert under his window, threw up the sash, and in the most gentlemanlike and gentle manner, addressed them, as he would have liked himself and his family to have been accosted, by the civil appellations of ladies and gentlemen—accompanied by an equally courteous request that they would choose some other scene of action, and not molest him.

“Strange to say, this well-bred and pacific line of conduct had not the slightest effect upon his feline tormentors; which induced him to proceed to what *he* thought a very strong and decisive measure; which was, again opening the window, and, in a clear and sonorous voice, reading the riot act to them; but, *mirabile dictu!* this also was unavailing; and the poor professor might have been suffering from their persecution till now, had not a friend opportunely

come in and fired a pistol amongst them, which produced more effect than all the learned gentleman's bland remonstrances.

"What chance then had mere truth, simplicity, and good intentions, on the part of this distant relation, against the subtle and serpent-like craft of the clever and unprincipled husband?—who, to the depravity and pliancy of the most abject intrigue, united the vaunting of the most lofty hypocrisy—which, by placing his conduct beyond the reach of investigation, enabled him to stalk triumphantly through the world on the stilts of falsehood. Hopeless of redress from virtuous imbecility on the one side, and clever villany on the other, the poor wife grew desperate, and refused to sign the forced and degrading deed of separation; but into this she was soon compelled by her husband, who, while he was all blandness and apparent fairness to others, the attorneys, etc., wrote her the most intimidating and brutal letters—again reminding her that she had neither father nor brother, and that she had no redress, there being but one law for a woman on such occasions—a law which no woman of the slightest delicacy or feeling would or could resort to. Here, then, *his* every point was gained;—and *her* last struggle was, to remain in her house a few weeks longer, and join in society, that her separation from her husband might not be confounded with that of a notoriously bad character, which had taken place, at the time, on very disgraceful grounds.

"This the husband agreed to, adding, with his usual crafty plausibility, to her relative and the attorneys, that whatever redounded to his wife's respectability must conduce to his.

"So much for his words, while his actions were to try, by every underhand means possible, to prevent her being noticed by any one.

"She went with her children to a miserable and secluded village in Wales; there she remained for two years, her dear friends in London of course forgetting her with all possible expedition, and thinking it expedient to join forces with her husband; he being a rising man, who kept a good *chef*, and gave political dinners and agreeable *soirées* to the most agreeable and notorious demi-reps in London. As for his immoralities—'fellow feeling' of course made them 'wondrous kind' on that score; and for certain meannesses and brutalities, which the world, bad as it is, does not and cannot openly countenance, a few colossal and skilful falsehoods soon gilded them into positive virtues or venial errors. Meanwhile his poor wife, added to the great and deep wrongs she had to bear, was surrounded by coarseness and vulgarity, which, while the miserable stipend her husband allowed her compelled her to endure, the habits of her life and her own natural refinement made almost unendurable. Still there were her children, and in looking forward to what they would be, from feeling justly proud of what they were, she endeavoured to forget the past by living in the future; and the whole neighbourhood vying with each other in kindness and attention to her, enabled her in some degree to wade through the present. But at length the difficulty of getting masters, and the vulgarity of the *locale*, induced her, for her children's sake, to return to England, and settle about two days' journey from London. This so infuriated her husband, who dreaded the truths that might transpire by her returning so near her former ground, and which her absence and his diplomatic falsehoods had so successfully lulled to sleep, that he resolved upon the last cruelty and outrage in his power to inflict, that of tearing her children from her; but not having a single thing to bring against her, this required even more than his usual caution and plausibility; for though the law of the land gives a father, however openly and notoriously profligate in his conduct, and careless of their interests, inalienable power over the persons of his children, yet the law of opinion always exacts certain dues, which, if not acceded to in *truth*, must be evaded by falsehood.

"Accordingly, his first pretext was, that he could not leave his children with her until he knew *where* she intended to live.

"Of course, had he really cared for his children, the *person* they were with,

and not the *place* they were in, would have been the source of his anxiety ; but, being a thorough-going Whig, *place* was naturally his only object. When informed of his wife's intended residence, he expressed himself perfectly satisfied, and said he thought it a very good place, and that he had no objection.

“Here, then, every one would have supposed the matter ended, and she was to have her children ; but no—next followed a set of frivolous vexations, and impossible-to-accede-to stipulations, which were—that if he allowed them to remain with her, she must never go out anywhere, as she had gone out more than *he* approved of in Wales, and had not devoted herself sufficiently, according to his notions, to her children. This, from such a father to such a mother, was a little too much. The next stipulation was, that she must neither live in lodgings, nor at an hotel, nor in the house with anybody else. Now this latter stipulation he knew to be impossible ; for from the miserable pittance he allowed her, while spending thousands on his own vices, had it not been for the kindness of friends who permitted her to live with them, she could not have lived at all according to her sphere of life.

“This last piece of petty tyranny—even the attorney who, in the first instance, had so mismanaged the business and played so completely into the husband's hands, advised her by no means to submit to. Nor did she—for well she knew that, arbitrary and degrading as the terms were, had she complied with them to the letter, it would not have prevented his exercising the brutal but legal power of taking them from her at a moment's warning ; consequently she steadily and indignantly refused to do so.

“After some time, she wrote an imploring letter to him, entreating him not to crown all her other injuries by persisting in this most cruel and insupportable of all, and begging him to remember that a time must come when the reflection of not having done *all* the wrong in his power would be a source of far greater satisfaction to him than the remembrance of all his triumphs, whether merited or the reverse.

“To this, his only reply was a letter of the most brutal upbraiding ; this was an autograph, but was soon followed by one from a low attorney, who was in the habit of chicaning him through his elections, stating that her husband would allow her children to be within ten miles of her, and that she might have free access to them, provided she would give a solemn promise never to attempt to remove them, and a written document expressing her gratitude for his consideration of her feelings evinced in this arrangement. It is needless to say that this was also rejected with scorn, excited to madness by thus having every injury cemented with insult. Upon hearing that he solemnly denied ever having personally ill-used her, she wrote to his mother, (who had first instigated and then screened him through every stage of his misconduct,) because, upon one occasion of greater outrage than usual, she had gone to that unprincipled mother ; and in that letter she taxed him with the falsehood of his assertion, and told her that as she wanted nothing from her—for that she would rather beg her own and her children's bread than owe it to her—she could venture to tell her the truth.

“This was of course made an additional handle against her ; and her jesuitical husband gained fresh ground and applause among his own clique, by giving out that he could not allow his children to remain with a woman who had insulted his mother, though in reality the children had been taken six months before that letter was written : but then the mother was rich, and he has beggared his wife ; and besides, as he justly observes, she has neither father nor brother. But this is a well-judging world—for it always concludes that might is right. And now behold this once-devoted, all-enduring, and over-generous wife, guiltless of all, save having ‘loved not wisely, but too well.’ With her heart torn up by the roots, when her children were torn from her, and with them of course the last lingering feeling she might have had for their father, deprived of her position in society, and cast unprotected and unprovided for, according to her rank in

life, upon the world—obliged to write, in order to provide the common comforts she had been accustomed to ; and if she sometimes subsides into calm, every feeling is harrowed up by receiving a dun for some bill of her husband's mistress, who not only has usurped her home, but her name. What wonder, then, that her pen is sometimes dipped in gall ? Yet the world, which never troubles itself about the truth of anything, is always ready to exclaim, (especially those virtuous ladies who, while they are dishonouring their indulgent lords, never perform a single wife-like duty,) how very wrong of a wife ever to write *at* her husband ; though the better and more respectable portion of society wonder at nothing, when they know the provocation. Besides, the reaction of so much forbearance is always in extremes, just as the sweetest wine makes the sharpest vinegar ; but women, being considered by men as nonentities in the scale of creation, are not allowed to have, or at least to express, any feelings of indignation, let them have sustained what injuries and outrages they may ; whereas, were a tinker or a chimney-sweep wronged but a hair's breadth by his fellow man, and that man were a monarch, could the former get up a revolution to avenge his quarrel, he may chance to take the monarch's place, and at all events descends a ready-made hero to posterity ; but woe betide the woman who has

‘ The will to do, the soul to dare,
The sparkling glance soon blown to fire
Of ardent love, or headlong ire ;’

unless, indeed, she has been the heroine of a disgraceful and disgusting trial, and is the tool of a political faction ; then her profligacy and its triumphs may attain to masculine immunities, and a political party may be organised to force her again upon society, even against the ordinary rules of its *Tartuffe* code, which has adopted for its principle,

‘ Pécher en secret n'est pas pécher,
Ce n'est que l'éclat qui fait le crime.’

But if she be only ‘sinned against,’ not sinning, it is thought particularly shocking if she does not submit to every species of tyranny, insult, and injustice, without a murmur ; and for half the women in the world who are content to attain their petty and ignoble ends by low cunning and small craft, silent submission is a sort of *Fortunatus's* cap ; but I, who believe intellect to be epicene, also believe that there are women, who, like *Coriolanus*, have natures

. ‘ too noble for the world ;
That would not flatter Neptune for his trident,
Or Jove for his power to thunder. Their heart's their mouth :
What their breast forges, that their tongue must vent ;
And, being angry, do forget that ever
They heard the name of death.’

“ If it be true, and that it is I for one have no doubt, ‘ *que toutes les belles pensées viennent du cœur*,’ it must be from the heart that esteem proceeds ; and therefore mere intellectual pre-eminence, unpoised by the ballast of moral excellence, can never command it. It is easy for the world, who view the phantasmagoria of life as they do that of a magic lantern, looking merely to the delusive effects produced by certain ugly and invisible machinery, to be dazzled and deceived by brilliant talents ; but the poor drudges condemned to the care and display of the fantoccini may not be quite so charmed ; and that country must be an immoral one, where the mirage of a man's public life is allowed to cast a sanctifying vapour over the plague-spots of his private character, which is treated as an Eleusinian mystery, and seems to be defended by the all-powerful *μυστήριον*, that threatens nothing short of death, or divine vengeance, if revealed. As a case in point, the husband I have been telling you about made his *début* as a father by turning his first child out of the house the moment it was born, saying that he would not have his wife's time and affection mono-

polished by any d——d child. Yet this very man gets up on a hustings, and, speaking of the poor-laws, makes the following beautiful and benevolent peroration:—

“ ‘And, above all, I am opposed to that peculiar vice in the present system, which, contrary to all the nearest and dearest ties of nature, and the honest rights of humanity, would separate a man, often towards the painful decline of life, from the partner who has shared all his trials, and from the children who have been, perhaps, the solitary sources of comfort and hope that a long career of labour has enjoyed.’ Now, the mob who heard this no doubt thought it exquisite, and that Howard the philanthropist was a Nero to their worthy member; but no one can be surprised that his wife and a few more, who knew *les dessous des cartes*, smiled with disgust, and thought, as Miss Biddy Fudge did, about that most amiable of scoundrels, Jean Jacques,—

‘Alas! that a man of such exquisite notions,
Should send his poor brats to the Foundling, my dear.’

“Julia! it is a similar crisis I dread for you. Fancy yourself rewarded for your years of forbearance and endurance, by having your child torn from you—could you bear it?”

“I answer for you, that you could not; and that the same energy, which now enables you to bear and to conceal, would then excite you to resist and to expose; but my fears outstrip probability. You have a father, and you have brothers; and the case I have alluded to will, I trust, remain as it now is—unique,

“Still, vague and sickening apprehensions crowd through my heart, when I think what *may* be; for a man that indulges in acts of personal violence towards his wife must of necessity have recourse to so many falsehoods, and so much meanness, to retain his position in the world’s opinion, that time infallibly obliterates even the shadow of respect which every virtuous woman wishes and tries to feel for her husband, be that husband what he may; and it is this stage of your married life that I dread; for the lady whose history I have just detailed to you I have known these ten years; and no two human beings ever differed more widely from each other, than than woman does now from her former self.

“When first I knew her, she was gay, happy, and confiding; ‘with eyes that seem’d to love whate’er they looked upon.’ Now she knows no alternations but despair and frenzy; and the greatest proof of friendship any one could evince towards her, would only make her ask, ‘I wonder how soon they’ll turn upon me?’

“There is something fearful in the breaking of a woman’s heart. Her struggles against fate are so exhausting, yet so fruitless—her hopes of redress so impossible,—as well might a poor wretch, laden with irons in a condemned cell when a prison was on fire, hope or attempt to escape merely by their own crippled exertions, or by appeals to stone walls for mercy, as woman attempt to resist man’s tyranny when he chooses to exercise it.

“When I think of these things, I fear that you must almost hate our whole sex, for the sake of one. And I scarcely have courage to offer you a friendship, which time and circumstances alone can convince you is as pure as warm, and as generous as your own heart.

“At present I feel that its only test must be negatives; that it will be evinced, not by what I do, but by what I abstain from doing. And oh! should that blessed time ever come, when you may demand more active and substantial proofs of it, you shall find that the word *impossible* does not exist for me.

“Who can tell when the hidden and fragile threads that hold our destinies may break? Should mine snap first, you and your child will inherit all I possess. If we may not share it now, it will still be a bond between us, to think that what is mine will be yours.

"I was told last night, by that young bear Charles Dinely, that my poor uncle Cheveley was going fast. He was in every respect the antipodes of my mother—being gloomy, misanthropical, and morose. I have not seen him since I was fourteen, when unfortunately I offended him mortally; for while playing battledore in the library, the shuttlecock happened to fall upon his nose, when he was hear-hearing over one of Lord Grey's speeches. That very night saw me safely returned to my mother, with many dark prophecies concerning my future fate, which were anything but flattering to her hopes or my vanity.

"Disgusted, as I am, with the profligate, personal, and pyritic tone of politics in the present day, I shall not be sorry to be removed from the Commons' House; which, instead of representing the people, as they profess to do, in reality only represent the minister, whose tools they are; for, were they the faithful stewards of the interests of their country, the careful checks on the administration of its finance, and the honest and incorruptible advisers of the executive branch of its legislature, I doubt whether they would dabble in or countenance that political alchemy, which can transmute the same measure that was vituperated as destruction to the country when brought forward by one minister, into its salvation when resorted to as a *pis aller* by his successor.

"To conquer this corruption is next to impossible, as long as the people delegate legislative power to pauper representatives, who, though they make their interests the stepping-stone, have in reality only their own individual advancement in view; and though no one can deny that occasionally bright and glorious characters have arisen from among the people themselves, who, in spite of the general corruption and depravity of the times in which they lived, have manifested the superior influence of integrity and wisdom, yet it would be, or rather it is, unwise for the people of England to trust their fate to the chance of such luminaries often arising, instead of establishing their liberties and properties on the only sure foundation, which was the original intention of the constitution to create,—namely, a strict relation between themselves and the House of Commons, and then they would not be the dupes of those splendid legislative clap-traps, baited with popular fallacies, which enable their leaders so successfully to betray the public interest, while they appear to succumb to and be actuated by public opinion. However, I foresee that the Repeal of the Union will soon supersede, as a matter of dispute, excitement, and tergiversation, the Catholic Question and the Reform Bill; and upon this question it is most likely the present ministry will totter to their fall.

"But enough of politics—though the happiness of writing to you, next to that of conversing with you, gives an interest to any subject which may be the means of prolonging that happiness. Forgive me, then, if I have in this instance been selfish enough to gratify myself at your expense. Knowing, as I do, the unselfishness of your nature, I cannot but prophecy much happiness to you in your sister's fate; for a more amiable, honourable, or high-minded fellow than Saville does not exist; and there is a sufficient difference in their characters, and unity in their *principles* and *opinions*, to insure their mutual welfare; for while too great a sameness of disposition invariably produces ennui in married life, yet opposite principles and opinions as invariably produce dissensions, or something worse. Principles being things with very deep and tenacious roots, no one possessing them cares to eradicate them; so the uttermost a woman can do, (whose part it is always to yield,) is to suppress or control them: and as even this is not to be done *per saltum*, but by degrees, the danger is, that she may retrograde often, and weary eventually in the task.

"As friends, Saville's and my sympathy ceases. Hitherto, every thought of my heart has been bared to his inspection: but now that I have but *one* thought, and that thought is *you*, it must be veiled from all beholders: besides, out of *small* things, there is no such thing as sympathy; for even though people know *all* that you do, they do not know it *as* you do: and even though they feel *for* you, they cannot feel *with* you. As well might a chameleon expect the eyes

that looked upon it to change their colour every time it changed its hues, as expect any other heart to sympathise with all the shades of feeling that chequer our own.

"But in *our* case—ah, Julia! how I love that little word, which, in spite of fate itself, unites us—in our case, what could we hope from friends but frowning displeasure—liberal donations of advice rendered formidable by a *chevaux de frise* of prudence, to which we never could hope to attain?

"With regard to your dear, dear self, individually, I cannot think without torture—and it is not to oppress and disturb you more than you already are, but to nerve and prepare you—that in this letter I have so often urged you to turn your thoughts to the future, which, impossible as it now seems to you, *may* be worse than the present. For what cannot want of feeling and want of principle, when combined with power, craft, and hypocrisy, accomplish? Indeed, when exercised against a wife, *power* is sufficient. 'For,' as Sir Thomas Baker says, speaking of Ann Bullen, 'who knows not that nature is not more able of an acorn to make an oak, than authority is able of the least surmise to make a *certainty*.' Whenever this, by me, much dreaded crisis should arrive—O *then*, Julia, remember, that in me you will have a staunch, a devoted, a considerate friend; and objectionable and unavailing as such friendship may *now* appear, it may yet be able to fulfil its whole and sole end—*your* welfare. God, the disposer of all things, alone knows what the ever-changing and shifting scenes of life may next bring forth; but I do think, that even in this world he does not suffer wrong always to prevail, nor those whom he chasteneth to be tried beyond their strength; 'but will, with the temptation, also make a way of escape.'

"In him then, in whom you have all along trusted, *still trust*. I dread ending this letter; for, in sealing it, I shall feel as if I were sealing our fate—that all is ended—that our last words are spoken. But what are words? They are but the body of thought, which *is* the soul. Many may have loved as deeply, (though I doubt it,) but none ever loved more purely than I do. Could it be otherwise, when it is *you* I love? O Julia! my heart has become a well of deep, deep love for you; and thoughts of you, like stars above it, are the only images it reflects. What, then, can sully the purity of its waters, or dim the hope, the fervency, and the sincerity, with which I shall now and ever say,

"God bless you!

"AUGUSTUS MOWBRAY."

As soon as Mowbray had enclosed and sealed this letter, he placed it within the leaves of that most exquisite little volume, M. de Saintine's "*Picciola*," which he had promised to lend Lady De Clifford; and again carefully sealing that up, he rang for Sandford, and ordered him to give it to her maid, with his compliments, to know how she was.

No sooner was it fairly gone, than he paced the room restless and dissatisfied with all he had said, and still more with all he had left unsaid. Alternately he reproached himself with not having more improved the only opportunity that might ever occur of writing to Julia, by wasting so many words upon indifferent subjects, and immediately after felicitated himself upon having resorted to the only expedient by which he could have ventured to prolong his letter. But who ever yet wrote such a letter, and was satisfied with what they had written? for is not love

——— “all made of fantasy,
 All made of passion, and all made of wishes;
 All adoration, duty, and observance;
 All humbleness, all patience and impatience;
 All purity, all trial, all observance;”

in short, all contradictions?

At length, exhausted with fatigue both of mind and body, Mowbray flung himself upon the bed, but was too feverish and dispirited to sleep.

CHAPTER XIX.

Patience, unmoved, no marvel though she pause;
 They can be meek that have no other cause.
 A wretched soul, bruised with adversity,
 We bid be quiet when we hear it cry;
 But were we burden'd with like weight of pain,
 As much or more we should ourselves complain.—SHAKESPEARE.

Though you have tried that nothing's borne
 With greater ease than public scorn,
 That all affronts do still give place
 To your impenetrable face,
 That makes your way through all affairs,
 As pigs through hedges creep with theirs;
 Yet, as 't is counterfeit and brass,
 You must not think 't will always pass.—HUDIBRAS.

No thread of candour woofs her web of wiles.—BYRON.

THE morning after Madame de A.'s ball, the dowager Lady De Clifford was sitting before her toilet-table, upon which were ranged, not indeed

“Twelve vast French romances, neatly gilt,”

but a pile of war novels—a species of literature in which her ladyship much delighted and often indulged. At the other side of the table were two sets of teeth, the Elizabethan ruff she had worn on the preceding night, and a green fan. Frump was busily employed brushing her mistress's hair, who was as busily employed reading “The Star of Fashion,” by Anthony Frederick Holstein, when a knock came to the door.

“Frump, Frump! see who's there,” said her ladyship, throwing her handkerchief over the false teeth.

Frump opened the door at first cautiously, but, seeing that it was Lord De Clifford, opened it widely as she said, “It's Lord De Clifford, my lady.”

“O come in, my dear; I did not think you'd have been stirring so soon after the ball last night, which, by-the-bye, I thought *vaustly* stupid.”

“D——n the ball!” said he, throwing himself into a chair, folding his dressing-gown about him, and then his arms, as he

frowned at Frump and his mother, as much as to say, "Tell her to go away."

"You may go, Frump," said her ladyship, taking the hint, "and I'll ring when I want you."

Long practice had rendered this amiable lady as skilful in detecting her son's changes of humour and impending storms, as the Chinese are in foreseeing change of weather, from the variations of colour in their stone man near Vuchen, on the top of the hill of Vangkiu.

"What is it, my dear?" inquired she, as soon as Frump had closed the door.

"O that d——d woman pretends that I have hurt or put her wrist out of joint, because I just touched her last night for answering me impertinently."

"Which—who—my dear?"

"Why, Lady De Clifford. Not that I'd care what the d——l she said; only in a place of this sort everything gets about, and one does not like to be talked of."

"Very just observation, my dear; but how did it happen?"

"Why, last night, instead of going for some books I asked her for, she very impertinently pointed to where they were; and I struck her hand, but in a way that could not have hurt a fly; and yet she has made a perfect uproar about it, by going to bed, and sending for a doctor; and that d——d maid of hers has belled about through the hotel that she will never be able to use her hand again."

"I'm sure, my dear, it does great credit to your head and *hort* that you were so mild under such terrible provocation; but it would have been more prudent in this ill-natured world, where things are so misrepresented, if you had not touched her; but you see, my dear, you are too open and candid; but, as I always tell you, you would be so much happier and freer in every way living *eng gorsony*, and when we return to England we must see and contrive it. And the little *gurl* might be sent to school, as I think it's giving her mother too much power to leave her with her; but all this is for future consideration—the thing is now to decide upon what we had best do. Let me see," continued she, putting two fingers of her right hand against her cheek, and the other two on her chin, as was her wont when constructing a falsehood or a plot—"let me see—the best plan will be both for you and me to be very civil and attentive to her, and to be loud in our regrets to every one in the house about Lady De Clifford's accident: be sure, my dear, not to forget to call it 'accident'—never say 'hurt.'"

"You are quite right, my dear ma'am, but you *are* so clever—I never knew such a head for business in my life; it's a d——l of a bore, but do you think I had better go down to her now?"

"No, my dear—you had better let me pave the way by seeing her first, and, in order to do so, I'll write her a note, to ask when she will see me."

"I'm sure, my dear ma'am, you are extremely kind, and I feel greatly obliged to you—and, as you say, it would be much better if I could get rid of her altogether; but you see there is so much cant in the world, that it requires great skill and caution in managing it."

"Very just observation, my dear, but—" here another knock came to the door.

"Who's there?" cried the dowager sharply.

"It's only me, my dear mamma," wooed Mr. Herbert Grimstone through the keyhole, "who wish to know how you are after the fatigues of last night?"

"O, come in, my dear."

And in Mr. Herbert Grimstone came. After having imprinted a gallant kiss on his mother's skinny hand, and told her, that after her appearance, and the sensation she created the night before, he no longer doubted the description of Queen Elizabeth's beauty as given in the chronicles, he turned to his brother—

"Well, my dear fellow, and how are you?"

"Sadly plagued, my dear, about this here tiresome business," said his mother, answering for him.

"What business?" asked Herbert.

Here followed a false and garbled statement of poor Julia's dis-jointed wrist, which when he had heard, Mr. Herbert Grimstone, after his usual preliminary grasp of the five hairs on his right temple with the extended palm and whole five fingers of his right hand, affectionately turned first to his mother, and next to his brother, with—

"Well, my dear ma'am—well, my dear De Clifford, what do you wish me to do? I'll be guided entirely by you. Shall I go to Julia, and tell her that you can't possibly live with her after such conduct—eh?"

"O, my dear fellow, I'm sure you're very kind," said Lord De Clifford, taking Herbert's extended hand, "but—"

Here their amiable mother interrupted this *par nobile fratrum* to explain her plan on the occasion, of which Mr. Herbert Grimstone approved as highly as his brother had previously done, and then said—

"Perhaps, then, I had better go down and sit with her, and tell her about the ball—that will look affectionate and attentive, and all that sort of thing; and if she hints at my brother having struck her, I can reason with her, and tell her how much better it will be for her to say nothing about it, but pass it off as an accident."

"Very just observation, my dear."

"But as I before said, my dear *mamma*," resumed Herbert, "I am quite ready to do whatever you and my brother wish. By-the-bye, my dear fellow, I had a letter from Protocol this morning, and if Denham remains at St. Petersburg, I have no doubt of being appointed Secretary of Legation. One of his daughters would be a devilish good speculation—one could but be refused, you know, and it would be an epoch in one's life even to have been *near* getting forty thousand pounds. Ha! ha! ha!"

"Ah, so it would," replied his brother, "but it would be a better speculation still if you succeeded, for I have no doubt of Denham's ultimately being premier."

"At all events," said Herbert, "I know his intention is to return to England at the next favourable crisis, and try to be Minister for Foreign Affairs."

"But what the deuce will Lord Melford do with Protocol? for after thirty years' tenacious adherence to office, through the most sudden chances and extreme changes, I should think he would not be easily ousted or transferred," said Lord De Clifford.

"True, but you see Denham calculates upon the friendship and influence of a certain illustrious lady, and if that influence really exists to the extent he believes, Protocol, nor even Melford himself, dare scarcely run counter to it. As things are likely to turn out, I am deuced sorry that I did not from the first pay more attention to the rising sun, and boldly adopt a more decidedly radical line of politics: but then you see, as long as Shuffleton's interest was unshaken, one did not well know what to do."

"Tut, tut, tut, my dear," cried his mother, placing her hand upon Herbert's arm, "don't talk of being radical; you know, as I always say, I'm a Tory—I think it's what all landed proprietors ought to be."

"Very true, my dear *mamma*," replied Herbert laughing, and again gallantly kissing his revered parent's hand, "and when I am a landed proprietor I'll be a Tory too, or anything else you please."

Now, fond as her ladyship was of the term "landed proprietor," as applied to the first person singular, she had a mortal dislike to the remotest allusion to the reversion of landed property, and therefore instantly changed the subject by saying to her sons—

"Well, my dears, you had better go now, for I must write this here tiresome note to Lady De Clifford."

Rejoiced at the command, the brothers did not "stand upon the order of their going," but "went at once." As soon as they had departed, their mother sat down and wrote the following affectionate little note to her daughter-in-law:

“DEAR MADAM,—I much regret hearing of the bad accident which you met with, and which prevented our having the pleasure of seeing you at the ball last night. I hope, my dear madam, you instantly sent for medical advice, as the money given to doctors is, I am sure, the *d'argent* De Clifford grudges least. I am sorry not to be at Blichingly now, that I might send you some game, as being able to supply our friends with game is the greatest pleasure we landed proprietors have. Should it be agreeable to you, I will do myself the pleasure of going to sit with you this morning. You see, by this offer of going into your room, I treat you quite *en famille*, but I think the less ceremony among friends the better.

“I remain, my dear Madam, yours, truly, “E. B. B. DE CLIFFORD.”

Who could be critical as to *l'éloquence du billet*, where there was so much affection and sincerity as in the foregoing note. Hannah More used to say, “that letters between relations should be a sort of family newspaper.” Now the Dowager Lady De Clifford's epistolary effusions were so far on this model, that they might have passed for *jeux d'esprit* extracted from the Kentucky Gazette or Boston Transcript. As soon as she had sealed the amiable note in question with yellow wax and a large bread seal, containing, by way of motto, in corpulent old English letters, the word “L'Amitié,” surrounded by a wreath of sunflowers, Frump was rung for, and it was despatched. Poor Lady De Clifford, who had passed a feverish and painful night, had just awoke about noon from an opium sleep, and found her sister and her child sitting by her bedside, the latter with her little cheek leaning on her mother's hand.

“Dear mamma,” said she, as soon as she perceived she was awake, “how did you hurt your other poor hand, that it is so tied up? besides, I know that you must have been very ill, for Berryl would not let either Tiney or Zoe into the room, and, poor little things, they have been moaning so all the morning up stairs.

“Yes, how did you hurt your hand, dear?” asked Fanny, as she stooped to kiss her sister's burning cheek.

“I scarcely know,” said Lady De Clifford, pressing Fanny's hand, and looking towards Julia, as much as to say, “Don't ask me before her; and before Fanny had time to ask any further questions, Berryl entered with Mowbray's parcel.

“Mr. Mowbray's compliments, to know how you are this morning, my lady,” said Berryl, handing it to her; “and is your ladyship well enough to see Mr. Herbert, who is at the door.”

“Yes—no—that is,” said Lady De Clifford, pushing “Picciola” under the pillow, “my compliments to Mr. Mowbray, I am better this morning; but I am really not well enough to see Mr. Grimstone.”

Berryl delivered this answer; whereupon the affectionate Herbert put his head in at the door, and said in a voice, like honey spread on velvet—

“My dearest Julia! I am grieved beyond measure to hear of your sad accident; and you have no idea of the state my brother is in about you. Is there anything on earth I can do for you?”

“Shut the door, Berryl,” said Fanny, affecting not to hear the voice from the honeycomb, though in reality feeling the sting of its hypocrisy; “the draught is too much for Lady De Clifford.”

As one of kindness was the only office Mr. Herbert Grimstone had no ambition to fill, so it was the sole one from which he had no reluctance to retire; therefore he pocketed Miss Neville’s affront, and withdrew; but he had scarcely done so, before the door was assailed with another knock. It was Frump, with the dowager’s note.

“*Hi’ll* thank you, Mrs. Frump, if you please,” said Berryl, sharply, as she took the note, “not to knock in such an *obstropolus* manner, when *my* lady *his* *hill*.”

“*Missus* wants a *hanser*, if you please, *mum*,” said the plebeian Frump, without taking the slightest notice of the aristocratic Berryl’s reproof.

“Open it, dear, will you?” said Lady De Clifford to Fanny, as soon as the note was brought to her; “who is it from?”

Miss Neville made no other answer than by reading it aloud in old Lady De Clifford’s voice and manner, though her gravity nearly gave way when she came to the *d’argent*. When she had finished it, she turned to her sister and said, “Well, my dear madam, what do you mean to do?”

“You know I must see her,” groaned Julia, “so I suppose the sooner I get it over, the better. My compliments, Berryl, and I shall be ready to see Lady De Clifford whenever it suits her convenience; and Julia, darling, go with Berryl; she wants to get you ready to go out.”

No sooner were the sisters left alone, than poor Lady De Clifford gave way to a flood of tears.

“Fy upon you, sister mine,” said Fanny, throwing her arms round her neck, and hiding her own tears by mingling them with her sister’s, “how can you let such a set of contemptible reptiles sting and worry you to death in this way? A woman with your mind and your sense should be above it, and beyond them. Were I you, or even were I in your place, being only what I am, which is not to be compared with you by a million of worlds, I would neutralise all their venom by sovereign contempt.”

“Ah! Fanny, if you were me, you would do as I do. Reason and mind are strong things, especially in the abstract; but what are they, when opposed to the overwhelming power that springs from the weakness of a broken heart? It is not of my husband’s cruelty, his neglect, nor even of the insult of his unconcealed infidelities that I complain, so much as of the crafty, cold-blooded

hypocrisy I am eternally called upon to endure; and the junto formed by himself, his mother, and his brother, who are for ever plotting, not only against my present but my future peace. At every personal outrage I receive, I am compelled to league against myself, by authenticating falsehoods to screen them. As far as the world goes, this I would gladly do; but to carry the jest so far as to be obliged to appear to them as if I believed their foulest deeds fair, when they choose that I should do so, is a little too much."

"Indeed it is, and too long have you borne it; were I you, I would conceal it no longer, but let them take the consequence of their conduct."

"I should find little redress, I fear, by so doing, for you know the frightful power that is vested in men, and there are certain mean tyrannical natures that always do a greater to justify a lesser wrong."

"Very true," said Fanny, "I am fully aware that all breaches,

... ' though small at first, soon opening wide,
In rushes folly with a full-moon tide;
Then welcome errors, of whatever size,
To justify it by a thousand lies.'

But still, as I said before, if you did not shield that detestable family quite so much, you would fare the better for it: for instance, although you have not said it, I am as convinced as that I am sitting here, that it was some fresh piece of violence on the part of my brutal *beau-frère* which has bruised and blackened your hand in that frightful manner; and when his vile old mother comes insulting you with her hypocritical condolences upon what she is pleased to mystify as your accident, I would boldly tell her that it was no accident, but more of her amiable son's handiwork, for which she will no doubt reward and applaud him. Brute as he is, I really think him an angel of light, compared to that withered old bale of wickedness."

"My dear Fanny," said Lady De Clifford, shaking her head, "I fear that would do me little good, for there is no redress for a woman, publicly or privately: our sex have no *esprit de corps*, but are, with very few exceptions, so weak and so wicked, as upon all occasions to aid and abet the other sex by countenancing their profligacy, and upholding their tyranny and injustice. Were women but true to themselves and to each other, their position as human beings would be widely different from what it now is, and ever must be, while they continue satisfied with being the degraded nonentities they are at present. I am no advocate for the ridiculous and immoral chimera, called the 'Rights of Women,'—for they have no rights—at least none that can or ought to empower them to fill those masculine niches in the world, which would authorise them to kill their fellow-creatures as soldiers, cajole them as statesmen, or cheat them as lawyers. A woman's proper and only

empire is her home, and unless her nature could be physically changed—that is, unless she could cease to be woman—it never can or ought to be any other; but still there should be some cruelty-to-animal act that would extend its protection to her in that sphere. If every man that has been notorious in the violation of his duty and cruelty to one woman, were shunned and contemned by every other on the strength of it, instead of (as is now the case) being not only tolerated, but additionally countenanced, the number of domestic tragedies would sensibly decrease, and eventually almost cease to exist. How different is the conduct of men with regard to their own sex! It is neither their imaginary intellectual nor their real superiority of physical strength, nor even the laws they themselves have made, which constitute their omnipotence, half so much as the indissoluble manner in which they invariably uphold and support each other; for let them be ever so generous, high-minded, and chivalric in their feeling towards women, yet no sooner do they cabal together, when the injuries of a woman are the mooted point, than some corresponding and sympathetic chord of interest, feeling, vice, passion, or prejudice, is sure to be struck, which induces them to coalesce with those whom they have abstractedly condemned and theoretically opposed.”

“All you say, Julia, is but too true, and,” added Fanny, musingly, “I wish to goodness I could be an optimist, and then I should have some chance of being content; but it is the diving and doubting that distracts one, and suggesting amendments in one’s own mind to certain persons and things, which Providence evidently does not coincide in, as Hume says in one of his dialogues concerning natural religion. Some small touches given to the brain of Caligula in his infancy might have converted him into a Trajan. One wave a little higher than the rest, by burying Cæsar and his fortunes in the bottom of the sea, might have restored liberty to a considerable part of mankind. There may, for aught we know, be good reasons why Providence interposes not in this manner, but they are unknown to us; and though the mere supposition that such reasons exist may be sufficient to save the conclusion concerning the Divine attributes, yet surely it never can be sufficient to establish that conclusion.

“Dear Fanny, that was a very natural doubt for David Hume; but I should be sorry if it continued to be yours. I was lately reading a little work of Krummacher’s, called ‘The Vision of the Night,’ which would, I think, satisfactorily answer all your doubts, if indeed the Scriptures have not already done so; and do you not remember, in Isaiah, that cheering promise—‘For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee; neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy upon thee.’”

"Yes," replied Fanny, "that is one among the many assurances amid the words of everlasting life, sufficient to support us through the most galling and perplexing trials, did we but remember them to ponder upon; but unfortunately it is the characteristic of great affliction to banish every thought but what relates to itself."

"Alas! that is true," said Julia, "since there is even a divine instance of it on record; for our Saviour himself in the sharpness of his mortal agony, cried out, 'My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?' and in great distress we never can collect or subdue our thoughts sufficiently to remember that our sufferings are God's especial will, which would enable us to submit ourselves to them; but are all too apt to imagine that nothing but desertion of us on the part of the Almighty can account for our persecution; and yet, were our thoughts sufficiently with God to have him always in them, I am convinced this would not be the case."

"Certainly; but do you not, in common with every one else, find that it is the petty envyings, the low hypocrisies, and the small deceptions—in short, the insects of life, that sting and irritate one out of a healthy equanimity of mind? Every great calamity brings with it a certain degree of dignity sufficient for its support; to say nothing of their being of rarer occurrence; and if one might be allowed to choose one's own misfortunes, I think there are few, if any, who would not prefer being torn to pieces by a lion to being stung to death by gnats. For instance, Julia, confess that you find it easier to endure your husband's wholesale ill usage, than the retail attacks of his old wasp of a mother, or the puny buzzings of his gnat of a brother?"

Whatever reply Lady De Clifford might have returned to this last question of her sister's, was prevented by a knock at the door.

"Fanny," said the former, turning very pale, "will you see who is at the door, dear?"

"My dear madam," replied Fanny, assuming the dowager's voice, and paddle like motion of the hands, "I have no doubt it's the wasp coming to pay you the little affectionate visit she threatened, with, I suppose, the laudable intention of assuring you that her son is the best husband in the world."

"Pray," cried Julia, catching her sister's sleeve as she rose to go to the door, "do n't leave me if it is her, for I can't bear to be alone with that woman."

"Nor shall you, dear, for *you* do n't know how to answer or deal with her."

"Pray, pray, Fanny, for my sake, do n't say anything to her."

"I won't," said Fanny, "unless the case should be *very urgent*."

Here another knock compelled Fanny to open the door.

"My dear madam," said the dowager, passing Fanny with a stiff bow, and advancing to the bedside, where poor Lady De

Clifford had closed her eyes to shut out so disagreeable a vision, "I am *vaustly* sorry to hear of *this here* terrible accident. I assure you De Clifford has been in a terrible way about it—really his conduct has been quite lover-like;" here the ancient dissembler threw back her head, paddled her hands, and creaked out one of her vulpine smiles, which always had an unnatural appearance; for her muscles, albeit unused to the merry mood, seemed rusty and obdurate in the extreme; "and the only thing, my dear madam," continued she, "that at all consoled him, was your having had the prudence to send for a physician. I hope, I am sure, that he's been of service, and that you are not in much pain now."

"Thank you," said Julia, in a low and languid voice, "I am easier now."

"It was *vaustly* provoking, my dear madam," resumed the dowager, with still more *empressement* and hypocrisy than before, "and we all regretted it extremely. De Clifford was quite dull the whole evening, I assure you, that you should have been prevented coming to the ball by this *here* sad accident."

Fanny, who had been fidgeting about in her chair during the whole of this speech, could keep silent no longer, but said in a clear, distinct, and haughty tone—

"Your ladyship appears to be under some strange mistake about my sister's hand; for she was not hurt by any accident, but by a blow from Lord De Clifford."

Here ensued another rusty smile, another toss of the head, and more paddling of the hands on the part of the dowager, as she said, turning to Julia—

"You see, my dear madam, gentlemen are so rough in their *bodinawge*, (1) that they are apt sometimes to do mischief when they least intend it; but," continued she, looking mothers-in-law at Fanny, raising her voice and speaking with increased volubility, as though determined she would not be interrupted, "the worst thing you can do is to let your hand hang down; for I remember once, when my mother hurt her hand, she was ordered not to take it out of a sling for a month. I'll relate you the circumstance:—my mother was a *vaustly sperited* woman, and you must know, Lady De Clifford, it was the fashion in those days for ladies to drive themselves; and one evening she was driving in her phaeton rather late, on her return to Blichingly, across Hounslow Heath, when she was overtaken by a highwayman on a very *sperited* horse, in a black mask. (2) Now my mother being, as I before mentioned, one of the most *sperited* women of her day, never travelled without her pistols—so immediately drawing one, she shot the

(1) In plain French, *badinage*.

(2) It is to be presumed that it was the man, and not the horse, that wore the mask, as above stated.—*Printer's Devil*.

robber dead, which caused him to fall back in his saddle, and relinquish his grasp of her left hand, which he had tightly seized. Seeing that he was incapable of further resistance, with that wonderful presence of mind which never forsook her, she gave the reins to the groom, and getting out of the carriage, proceeded to search the robber's pockets, in which she found two heavily-laden purses, three watches, the miniature of a lady set with brilliants, and a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles, a boot-hook, a corkscrew, and a toothpick-case, all of which she sent to Bow-street the next day, except the corkscrew, which I have now at Blichingly. After this she drove off as fast as possible, and never even mentioned the circumstance till next morning at breakfast, when on looking over the *noospapers*, I saw a paragraph headed 'Wonderful courage of a lady;' and after I had read out the account I have just given you, my mother, (who was breaking a rusk in her chocolate with her right hand, her left being in a sling from the wrench the robber had given it,) said in as cool a voice as if she had been asking for a cup of tea, 'My dear, that was me. I did not think the circumstance worth mentioning last night.' Oh, she was a wonderful woman, my dear madam, so *vaustly sperited!*"

"Wonderful indeed!" said Fanny, her face buried in her handkerchief, almost convulsed with laughter.

Luckily at this crisis Berryl entered with some books and a parcel, which she gave to the dowager, who, opening the latter, drew from it a very dingy beetroot-coloured ten-shilling china crape shawl, which she presented to Lady De Clifford, saying—

"My dear madam, here is a *rare Ingee* (1) shawl I met with the other day, and as you have such *vaustly* good taste in dress, I thought it would be the very thing for you."

After which, with that generosity of spirit which the truly noble-minded always feel, to silence Julia's thanks, she began heaping fresh benefits upon her by adding—

"And here, my dear madam, are some books, which I thought might amuse you, for the novels some years back were much more amusing, and better written, than those of the present day. Let me see, here is a *vaustly* interesting one—'The Innocent Adulteress, and the Humane Assassin;' 'The Handsome Major; or, who the D——I can he be? by a young Lady of Fashion;' 'The Fortunate Village Maid; or, Memoirs of the Marchioness of L.V.;;' 'Read and find out what it Means;' 'She's off with the Footman; or, Who'd have thought it?'—and here, my dear madam, is a *vaustly* curious old book, in another style, not exactly a novel," and her ladyship raised her glass, and read out the following tempting bill of fare:—"The Law and Lawyers laid Open; in Twelve Visions, setting forth the Grievances of the Law, and the Remedies

(1) Anglice, Indian.

proposed ; A Description of a Court of Justice ; The Trial of Peter Puzzle ; Cause Postponed, and why ; A Lawyer and a Catchpole ; Identical Trial of Peter Puzzle ; Cause resumed ; His Crimes and Sentence ; A comical Trial of a Piece of a Lawyer, and a Patch of an Author ; Tim the Cozener—his Trial and Abuse of Foreigners, to the Scandal of his Country ; On Britannia's Complaint—receives Sentence as the defamer of his Country ; The Despairing Judge ; Opinion of the Bench on his Case ; The Skip turned Bencher ; Three Brethren very Far North contend for the Chancellorship, which Ends in a Fray ; An honest Attorney, permitted to speak for himself, is advanced near the Bench ; Modesty having a Cause desires to choose her Counsel, and has leave—she rejects a Multitude, and at last pitches on Faz——and Young K——by ; the Grand Question debated, whether an honest Counsel ought to plead a dishonest Cause ; Cicero's Speech thereon, and the Result ; Jack Ketch's Petition to the Sheriffs ; Characters of Sworn Appraisers, and their villanous Usage of unfortunate Tradesmen ; The Lawyers being ordered into Cells apart against a new Day of Trial, all the Cells are visited, their Persons described, and their several Employ ; to which is added, Plain Truth, in three Dialogues, between Trueman, Skinall, Dryboots, three Attorneys, and Season, a Bencher—Oh ! it's exceedingly clever, and *vaustly* amusing, I assure you !”

“ So I should think,” said Julia and Fanny, in the same breath, and again obliged to have recourse to their pocket-handkerchiefs. Delightful and intellectual as the conversation had been, it was beginning to flag, when the door leading into the drawing-room opened, and Lord De Clifford advanced, and, after having announced to his mother that breakfast was ready, folding his arms, and turning to his wife, though scarcely looking at her, said, in an exhilarating tone of voice, “ Well, my dear Julia, I hope you are better. Have you had your breakfast yet, or shall I send you in some ?”

“ O dear,” said the dowager rising, “ it is time you and I, Miss Neville, should go, for I hate to interrupt matrimonial *tête-à-têtes*—I think it is so delightful to see them.”

“ *Cela dépend*,” replied Fanny ; “ there may be a *magic* about them sometimes, certainly ; but when it degenerates into *legerdemain*, I cannot say I admire them,” added she, looking indignantly at her brother-in-law.

“ Why, d—n it,” said he, taking out his watch, “ it's half-past one ; we'd better all go to breakfast, if we mean to have any to-day.”

Lady De Clifford entreated them to do so, and was not sorry for the relief of being left to herself. Upon entering the breakfast-room, they found Saville on the sofa, reading the last Galignani

—Mr. Herbert Grimstone standing with his back to the fireless grate, looking at his painfully tight boots, more in sorrow than in anger—Mrs. Seymour was working a pair of slippers at one window, while Monsieur De Rivoli was at another, doing a caricature of Lord Charles Dinely, whom Herbert had invited to breakfast, and who was amusing himself by alternately entangling Mrs. Seymour's silks, and shying paper pellets into the gondolas as they passed under the window. Major Nonplus sat alone at a side-table, with a napkin tucked under his chin, and a dish as large as a boat before him of raw oysters, which he was devouring audibly. Reposing for one moment from his labours just as Fanny, Lord De Clifford, and the dowager entered, he exclaimed, with an ungratefully reproachful look at the Xenophon's trophy of empty shells before him—

“Ah,” as old Earle, the miser, used to say, “what capital things oysters would be, if one could but feed one's servants on the shells!”

“Very just observation,” responded the dowager.

“Alas! *nulla est sincera voluptas*, major,” sympathised Saville.

“Which means,” replied the latter, again returning to the charge, “no oyster without a shell, I suppose. After all, they are not so bad neither, for without them we'd have none of the sea water.”

“Ah! oui, et apparemment vous avez la mer à boire là,” cried Monsieur De Rivoli, looking over from his sketch at the innumerable instalments of the Adriatic that the major was swallowing.

“Pray,” said Herbert to his own servant, as he brought in his diurnal mess of prepared cocoa, and one of his homœopathic powders, “is Monsieur Barbouiller, the French gentleman, up yet?”

“He's been gone these two hours, sir,” replied the man.

“Gone! and did he leave no message for me?”

“No, sir, only a book, which he said I was to give you.”

“O, that is all right,” said Herbert, brightening up; and five minutes after, his beloved Timbuctoo was presented to him. He nearly pushed Mrs. Seymour's plate into her lap in his eagerness to search within the ponderous volume for some note or other definitive opinion of the departed critic. But, alas! none greeted him—save, at the end of the volume, one small quotation from Martial:

“Comitetur punica librum
Spongia,
Non possunt multæ una litura potest.”

“Stupid ass!” exclaimed he, closing the book, and banishing it to the back of his chair, as he resumed his attentions to a piece of dry toast.

“What’s the matter, my dear?” inquired his tender mother.

“O nothing, my dear mamma; only French people are either the cleverest or the silliest people in the world.”

“I say, old fellow,” cried Lord Charles Dinely from the other end of the table, enforcing the appeal by flinging a piece of roll at Herbert’s head, “let us see that petition, or whatever it is, that the man dressed as a sailor gave you last night at the ball, will you?”

“O it’s up in my room—I do n’t know where it is,” said Herbert, pensively running his fingers through his hair.

“Well, send for it, can’t you?” said Lord Charles, ringing the bell, and himself giving the order when the servant came.

“I do n’t know whether this is it or not, my lord,” said the man when he returned.

“Here, let’s see what it is,” said the latter, snatching it off the salver, and then added with a horse-laugh as soon as he had looked at it, “’Pon my soul this is capital; hang me if I do n’t vote for this when I get into Parliament, and I’ll make the governor do the same.”

“What is it?” unanimously asked the whole party.

“Why, an address to both Houses of Parliament for the suppression of old women of both sexes!”

Every one laughed except the dowager, who began to lower, till the amiable Herbert gallantly took her hand, and said, with his blindest smile, “I dare say, my dear mamma, it is very funny, and as there are no old women *here*, we may venture to read it.”

“Come, read it, Herbert,” said Lord Charles, throwing it to him.

“I can’t, I hate reading out—do you read it, Saville.”

“With all my heart,” said he; and accordingly he read out what will be found in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XX.

AN ADDRESS TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT, FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF OLD WOMEN OF BOTH SEXES.

Multa senem circumveniunt incommoda.—HORAT.

Ut mala quem scabies aut morbus regius urget,
Aut fanaticus error, et iracunda Diana.—IBID.

Old women, priests, and poultry have never enough.—ITALIAN PROVERB.

MY Lords and Gentlemen—deeply impressed as I am with the difficulties of the proposition I am about to lay before you, yet a glow of *real* patriotism, equally uninspired by a public dinner, or prompted by the hope of a place in the legislature, impels me without fear (though I can scarcely venture to hope without reproach) to offer to your consideration a few cogent reasons why, in the present session, you should seriously turn your attention to the

framing of a *Bill for the Suppression of Old Women of both Sexes*. This is the *real corporate* reform of which the country stands in need, and until these most ancient, most respectable, but most detrimental corporations, are "*Schedule A'd*," the march of intellect is merely wearing out its shoes, performing the goose-step, and reform enacting the part of major-domo in the dusthole, cutting the air, and calling it a victory, as he removes harmless rubbish that is in nobody's way.

In the proposed bill, you, my Lords, can have possibly nothing to fear for the safety of *your* "*order*;" nor you, Gentlemen of the House of Commons, surely cannot suppose that, in any animadversions uttered against the antiquities of either sex, the cap can fit you—as I promise you faithfully it will not be a *mob-cap*.

The late William Cobbett, M. P. for Oldham, that political mosaic, than whom no individual ever had less of the old woman about him, inasmuch as that the idiosyncrasy of the latter genus is an adamantine adhesiveness to a particular principle or opinion; whereas it is a well-known fact that the late gridiron Solon scarcely ever broached the same opinions for two consecutive months. The late William Cobbett has, in his "*legacy to Peel*," asked the following questions:—

"1. What will you now do with the House of Commons?"

"2. What will you do with Ireland, and particularly with the church of Ireland?"

"3. What will you do with the church and the dissenters of England?"

"4. On the destructive effects of funds and of paper money in England, France, and America.

"5. What will you do with the tax-eaters called pensioners, sinecurists, grantees, retired allowance people, half-pay people, secret-service people, and the like?"

"6. What will you do with the crown lands, and with the army, and especially with regard to the punishments in the army?"

These are all important questions, no doubt—very important questions; but there is another still more important question, my lords and gentlemen, to be asked—ay, and to be answered too—

"*What do you mean to do with the old women?*"

And this query I take to be the very nucleus of all those just quoted from the illustrious defunct.

A young gentleman of equal veracity and vacuity, not long ago miscarried of a pamphlet, in which he tells you that "*nothing can be done unless Whigs and Radicals alike see the imperative necessity of being united*," never for a moment perceiving (owing to that moral obliquity for which he is so celebrated) how monstrous an issue might be the result of an union between such very near relations; but I tell you that nothing can be done till you see

the imperative necessity of suppressing the old women of both sexes.

Before I search through the dim and shadowy light of past ages, amid the chaotic dust of buried empires, for the cause or causes of that supremacy and fiat-like sway which ancient ladies of both sexes seem to hold *jure divino*, or rather *jus civile*, over the affairs of this nether world, let it be clearly understood what I mean by the term "old woman." Never has it been, nor ever shall it be, employed by me in its vulgar and chronological sense; for there are quite as many octogenarian Ninons in mind as in person. The old women that should come within the pale of the Suppression Bill are like poets—they are born such—not made by any length of time whatever.

It is easy to perceive how the supremacy of the sisterhood has attained to its present colossal force, past ages having evidently awarded to them that precedence which the present seems to deem it sacrilege to dispute. One of the earliest explorers of far countries—that respectable old lady Bushequius—mentions, that in Thebes a very rudely-carved female statue had been excavated, playing on an instrument much resembling a viol or modern violin, and bearing marks of almost antediluvian antiquity, which clearly proves that, so far back as before the flood, old women played first fiddle. Nor was heaven itself free from their jurisdiction; for an old Latin poet, in the reign of Tiberius, apostrophises the Sun in the feminine gender, imploring her to be merciful in exerting her great influence over the fate of man; so that, allowing the sun to be feminine, even at that stage of the world she must have been a tolerably old lady.

Of the pernicious influence of old women in general, and ancient ladies in particular, there are a thousand instances on record. Alcibiades disfigured the most beautiful dog in the world by cutting off his tail, in order to turn the tongues of the Athenian old women from his own defects to those of his dog. The first sycophants that ever existed were also to be found among the old women; for, by the ancient laws of Athens, the exportation of figs was rendered criminal: the Attican figs being remarkably excellent, the Athenians did not choose that any foreigner should have the luxury of eating them. The prohibition was extremely ridiculous, but the Athenians were in earnest. Informers, therefore, were among them called "sycophants," from two Greek words signifying "fig," and "a discover." (1) And the very first informer was an old woman, who, in bleaching yarn on the sea-shore, detected one Glaucus, a fisherman, loading a vessel bound for Sicily with the forbidden fruit. From thenceforward this laudable office was chiefly monopolised by the Attican crones.

(1) See Plutarch de Curiositate.

The Romans, on the contrary, though by no means despising Attic information, had, as it is well known, both a personal and political aversion for old women, always excepting Messala, the Roman senator, who married Terentia, (the widow of Cicero, Sallust, and half a dozen of others,) in her extreme old age, merely for the sake of being talked about.

But by the Roman law we find different ages assigned for different purposes—as consular age, or that wherein a person might regularly hold the consulship, which was the forty-third year, so that he might sue for it in the forty-second—where it is to be observed, it was not necessary that either of those years should be expired, but only begun; besides that, men of extraordinary merit towards the republic were, in this matter, exempt from ordinary laws: hence, Corvinus was consul at twenty-three years of age, Scipio Æmilianus at thirty-six, and Pompey at thirty-five; others broke through the laws by violence, as Caius Marius the younger, and Octavius Cæsar, who procured themselves to be made consuls before twenty years of age.

How different are all these wise juvenilities of the ancients to all our modern antiques, when no man is deemed fit for high office in the state till he has become superannuated, *alias* an old woman, with the brilliant exception of William Pitt, the ablest statesman that England ever produced, who swayed the helm of state at two-and twenty—a perfect political infant! And yet, my lords and gentlemen, the greatest enemy his memory and his measures have amongst you, I think, must acknowledge that there was no dentition of intellect apparent at any epoch of his career—nay, his bitterest opponent cannot but confess that he formed an Augustan era for England—for through him “all the world were taxed.”

But to return. Among the Romans even, judiciary age, or that wherein a person was capable of sitting as judge, was not always the same; for, by the *lex servilis Glaucix*, none were allowed to be chosen under fifty or above sixty, which is proof positive that sixty was the Rubicon that, once passed, left no escape from old womanism; whereas, with us, sixty is the *toga virilis* that alone fits a man for public life. But even sixty among the Romans was by some other laws set aside, and changed for, and limited to, that of thirty-five, but reduced afterwards by Augustus to thirty; though Pittacus supposes a mistake here in the text, and that, instead of thirty-five and thirty, it ought to read twenty-five and twenty. Aristotle fixed the military age at seventeen. (Polit., lib. viii.)

The age for holding offices in the city, as *quæstor*, *ædile*, *tribune* of the people, etc., is not determined by the annual laws of Villius, but appears to have been the twenty-seventh year. How different is this from the protracted gestation of civic honours in our dege-

nerate days! Alas!—how often must a worthy alderman of the nineteenth century exert his powers of locomotion, and, like

“ Sir William Curtis, late Lord Mayor,
Remove from this here house to that ere,”

before he can hope to attain to the civic chair! how many nightly vigils must he keep over cheese or china, over beer or bridles, over rubies or red herrings, before he can at the Mansion House

“ Hush’d and satiate lay,
And chew in dreams the custard of the day !”

We have the experience of all past ages to prove how much the weal or woe of nations depends upon the capacity, integrity, and judgment of their rulers. But, from the undiminished (nay, increased) sway of the old ladies, this truth would seem to be totally disregarded.

Dinarchus, in his oration against Demosthenes, has the following passage.—“ To what causes, Athenians, is the prosperity or calamity of a state to be ascribed? To none so eminently as to its ministers and its generals. Turn your eyes to the state of Thebes,—it subsisted once,—it was once great,—it had its soldiers and commanders. There was a time (our elder citizens declare it, and on that authority I speak,) when Pelopidas led the ‘ sacred band ;’ when Epaminondas and his colleagues commanded the army. Then did the Thebans gain the victory at Leuctra ; then did they pierce into the territories of Lacedemon, before deemed inaccessible ; then did they achieve many and noble deeds. The Messenians they reinstated in their city, after a depression of four hundred years. To the Arcadians they gave freedom and independence ; whilst the world viewed their illustrious conduct with applause.

“ On the other hand,—at what time did they act ignobly, unworthy of their native magnanimity?—When Timolaus called himself Philip’s friend, and was corrupted by his gold ; when the traitor Proxenus led the mercenary forces collected for the expedition to Amphissa ;—when Theagenes, wretched and corrupt, like this man, was made commander of their band : then did these three men confound and utterly destroy the affairs of that state, and of all Greece. So indisputably true is it, that *leaders are the great cause of all the good and all the evil that can attend a community*. We see this in the instance of our own state. Reflect, and say at what time was this city great and eminent in Greece, worthy of our ancestors, and of their illustrious actions? When Conon (as our ancient citizens inform us) gained the naval victory of Cnidos ;—when Iphicrates cut off the detachment of the Lacedemonians ;—when Chalcias defeated the Spartan fleet at Maxos ;—when Timotheus triumphed at the sea-fight near Corcyra :—then, Athenians, then it was that the Lacedemonians, whose wise and faithful leaders, whose adherence to the *ancient institutions* had

rendered them illustrious, were reduced so low as to appear before us like abject supplicants, and implore for mercy.

“Our state, which they had subverted by means of those who then conducted our affairs, once more became the sovereign of Greece; and no wonder, when the men now mentioned were our generals, and Archinus and Cephalus our ministers. For what is the great security of every state and nation?—good generals and able ministers.”

Now observe, my lords and gentlemen, Dinarchus attributes all the former brilliant achievements and healthy tone of the Lacedemonian state, first to the wisdom and sound policy of its leaders, who were most assuredly both anti-ancient and anti-feminine; and secondly, to an adherence to the “*ancient institutions*” of the country. But mind, he does not say by an adherence to the *ancient ladies*. Pause, then, my lords and gentlemen, before you allow any old woman, or any set of old women, to urge you on into the total destruction of *all* the “*ancient institutions*” of your country. Municipal reform can never avail you, as long as *corporate reform* is still wanting; that is, as long as an influential old woman of either sex is allowed to remain extant.

I am well aware how many Timolauses there are among the Reformers, who, calling themselves Reform’s friend, allow themselves to be corrupted by Reform’s gold; for there is Reform gold, as well as Tory gold, though it must be acknowledged that the former much resembles the sovereigns that General Jackson has in that land of liberty, America, converted into eagles, inasmuch as the great alloy of republican dross it undergoes considerably lessens the sterling value of the legitimate coin.

All such *Timolaus* Reformers will of course be the very first to object to the Corporate, Ancient, Female Reform which I shall propose; and indeed it would be the height of ingratitude in them, did they *not* do so;—for it is as clear as noon-day that the first Reformer that ever existed was an old woman! But, in making this assertion, let it be understood that I do not mean the slightest personal allusion to my Lord Grey; heaven forbid! I have far too much respect for the order—*his* order I should say. No, I allude to a far more ancient and enterprising old lady, who, though anonymous, is not for that reason the less celebrated in the well-known nursery epic, beginning—

“There was an old woman tossed up in a blanket
Seventy times as high as the moon;
Where she was going I could not but ask her,
For in her hand she carried a Broom:
Old woman—old woman—old woman, said I,
Whither, ah whither up so high?
To sweep the cobwebs off the sky,
And I’ll be with you by-and-bye, by-and-bye.”

Now I beg leave to state that, after the most unwearied literary and antiquarian researches, I have discovered that the word *Broom*, at the close of the fourth stanza, is, in the black letter edition of the "Nursery Anthology," spelt *Brougham*. It is also evident that cobwebs bear a typical allusion to the celestial poor-laws; but notwithstanding the old lady's very sweeping reform, it does not appear that the planetary parishes have ever reaped any advantages from it, especially Apheta, (3) who has been in a sextile position nearer the sun ever since; this can only be accounted for by a supposition that when this enterprising and apogæic old lady had gone up so high, like Astolpho, she went still farther, even to the moon, in search of her reason, and having been much struck (*i. e.* moon-struck) with all she beheld, has remained there ever since, filtering her plans of reform through the reflected rays of the planet she now inhabits, and is still willing (with that philanthropy which first prompted so sublime an enterprise) to give a mouthful of moonshine to every hungry, needy, speculating, adventurous radical who shall invoke the spirit of Reform as embodied in her from whom it first emanated; come they in the trappings of pauper diplomacy, the Peachum craft of pickpocket patriotism, the foolscap uniform of radico-political pamphlets, or the beer and beefsteak gullibility of "Free and Independent Electors." (!) No matter; she has still moonshine enough for them all; and it is quite astonishing how long the latter can subsist upon this light but seemingly nutritive food. The Reform Bill itself, that grand panacea for all earthly ills, social, civil, and political, seems by-the-by, to have been framed upon the model of the magical Abracadabra of Serenus Samonicus, preceptor to the younger Gordian, as a charm or amulet for curing agues, and preventing other diseases. To have the effect, the word was to be written on paper and repeated, omitting each time the last letter in the former, that the whole may form a kind of inverted cone, in this manner:—

Abracadabra
 Abracadabr
 Abracadab
 Abracada
 Abracad
 Abraca
 Abrac
 Abra
 Abr
 Ab
 A

So that it has this property, that which way soever the letters are

(1) The name of the planet which is the giver of life in a nativity.

taken, beginning from the apex, and ascending from the left to the right, they make the same word, or, as some would have it, the same sentiment, as is found in the first whole line. This paper must be suspended round the neck by a thread; but, according to Julius Africanus, another ancient writer, the pronouncing the word in the same manner will do just as well. Here then is the whole scheme of the Reform Bill! beginning with a mystical and high-sounding word, becoming gradually less as you examine it, and eventually terminating in schedule A.—the magical operation of the whole consisting in and depending on repeating the word in every possible way, and reiterating it on every possible occasion.

Nobody being more fully aware than I am, my lords and gentlemen, of the feline unkillability of old women of both sexes, I have never for a moment entertained the utopian vision of exterminating them. No, I merely propose to suppress them, and that in the following manner; that all male old women entertaining an overweening opinion of themselves be forthwith shipped off to Lilliput, in order that then and there they may find their own level, allowing them to travel by steam, that they may have the pleasure of vapouring to the last; that all female old women may in like manner be instantly transported to Brobdignag, in the hope of making them think a little less of themselves, which may perhaps be brought to bear by the time they have had their heads nearly gnawed off, like poor Gulliver, by half a dozen Brobdignag babies; but with regard to this “consummation so devoutly to be wished,” nothing approximating to certainty can be surmised, as they will be by far the most troublesome part of the cargo; we can only hope that they will not be like the old woman in the Irish song, who, after eloping with his Satanic majesty, was politely returned by him to her sposo, with this very ungallant assertion—

“What to do with her I cannot well tell,
For she’s not fit for heaven, and won’t stay in hell.”

I shall now proceed to give a catalogue *raisonné* of all the old ladies that should come under the Suppression Act; and as Lindley Murray asserts that “the masculine is worthier than the feminine,” the former shall take precedence. Imprimis—All prime ministers having passed the rubicon of sixty, figuring as the hero of a crim. con. All ministers for foreign affairs, adding protocols to embassies in the shape of young gentlemen who are never to be found at the seat of legation, but, after a three weeks’ residence in any foreign city, spawn a statistical work on the country, filled with errors, platitudes, and loose writing, and abounding in the *ludere cum sacris* of would-be witticisms—in short, an androgynal abortion, combining all the coarseness of the one sex with all the weakness of the other. All surgeons knowing no more of anatomy than was surmised by Aristotle. All physicians prescribing *eau*

médicinale for the gout, or applying a stethoscope when called in to attend a complaint in the heart, which, from the throb of the patient's pulse, they ought to know was a love fever. All attorneys compromising their clients' interests by an amiable candour towards the opposite party, which could only be admirable and admissible in a young lady of fifteen. All umpires whose eyes are in their ears, and who consequently detect no more in a case than what they hear from an interested party. All staff officers, who, having arrived at "that uncertain thing which certain people call a certain age," conceive the whole duties of their situation to be fulfilled when they have effectually succeeded in representing a centaur by dovetailing themselves to their saddles, and parading through the streets from morning till night. All editors of liberal papers who imagine (however republican the tone of their political articles may be) the community at large can believe either in the independence of their principles, or the uncompromising integrity of their opinions, when they turn to the evidently dining-out style and lord-and-lady-civility-inspired tone of their reviews of certain books. All husbands who suppose that their wives, like Indian grass, will become the sweeter the more they are trampled upon. All fathers who are continually annoying and disobeying their sons, solely from their ignorance, in not knowing that twenty has more wants, and consequently requires more money, than sixty. All gentlemen who, after fifty, go a step beyond Narcissus, and, not content with being enamoured of themselves, fancy that every one else is so too. All electors, who continue to enact Schacabac to the Barmecide (1) feast of reform set before them at every succeeding election by their representatives. All men who anticipate their conjugal authority, like Alnaschar ; but every one may not remember the story, so I will transcribe the part to which I allude, in the hope of preventing some worthy individuals from undertaking a voyage to Lilliput. Mark how the would-be husband soliloquises.

"When I am with my wife in the evening, I will sit on the upper hand. I will affect a grave air, without turning my head to one side or the other. I will speak little; and while my wife, as beautiful as the full moon, stands before me in all her ornaments, I will make as if I did not see her.

"Her women about her will say to me, 'Our dear lord and master, here is your spouse, your humble servant, before you. She expects that you would caress her, and is very much mortified that you do not so much as vouchsafe to look upon her. She is wearied with standing so long; bid her sit down.'

(1) Vide the Arabian Nights, where Schacabac goes to dine with the Barmecide, who keeps pressing him to eat the most delicious dishes, naming them one after the other, all the while not producing a single morsel of any sort of food, so that poor Schacabac is well nigh like to die of hunger—his appetite being duly whetted at the mention of so many good things.

“I will give no answer to this discourse, which will increase their surprising grief; they will lay themselves at my feet; and after they have done so a considerable time, begging me to relent, I will at last lift up my head and give her a careless look; afterwards I will return to my former posture; then will they think that my wife is not well enough, nor handsome enough dressed, and they will carry her to her closet, and change her apparel. At the same time I will get up and put on a more magnificent suit than before. They will return and hold the same discourse with me as before; *and I will never have the pleasure not so much as to look upon my wife*, till they have prayed and entreated so long as they did at first. Thus I will begin on the first day of my marriage to teach her what she is to expect during the rest of her life. *****

“She will certainly complain of my contempt of her, and of my pride, to her mother, the grand vizier’s wife, which will rejoice me at the heart. Her mother will come to wait upon me respectfully, kiss my hands, and say to me, ‘Sir,’ (for she will not dare to call me son-in-law, for fear of provoking me by such a familiar style,) ‘I pray you not to disdain my daughter. I assure you her chief business is to please you, and that she loves you with all her heart.’

“But my mother-in-law had as good hold her peace. I will not answer her one word. * * * Upon which my mother-in-law will take a glass of wine, and putting it into the hand of her daughter, my wife, will say, ‘Go, present him this glass of wine yourself; perhaps he will not be so cruel as to refuse it from so fair a hand.’

“My wife will come with the glass, and stand trembling before me; and when she finds that I do not even look towards her, that I continue to disdain her, she will say to me with tears in her eyes, ‘My heart, my dear soul, my amiable lord! I conjure you, by the favours heaven bestows upon you, to receive this glass of wine from the hand of your most humble servant!’ But I will not look upon her still, nor answer her.

“‘My charming spouse,’ she will say, redoubling her tears, and putting the glass to my mouth, ‘I will never leave off until I prevail with you to drink.’

“Then, being fatigued with her entreaties, I will dart a terrible look at her, give her a good box on the cheek, and give her such a push with my foot, as will throw her quite off the alcove.

“My brother was so full of these chimerical visions, that he acted with his foot as if his wife had really been before him, and, by misfortune, he gave such a push at his basket of glasses, that they were thrown down and broken into a thousand pieces.”—
(Arabian Nights, page 115.)

Now, the absurdity of Alnaschar’s conduct is obvious, inasmuch as that glasses are more frail even than wives; and having, in

reality, no wife to vent his just (!) indignation upon, he could not —(seeing that there are or were no hells in Bagdad—for there is no knowing how the march of intellect may put even the Turks upon their *metal*)—he could not, I say, like Major Longbow, when his better half was reduced to a heap of ashes by a *coup de soleil*, ring the bell “with infinite promptitude,” and desire the servant to “bring clean glasses, and sweep his mistress away.”

Now, with regard to the female old ladies, I should say the following fully deserve to come within the Suppression Bill—namely:—All old women thinking it impossible that any one can possibly be a judge of their own affairs, and of what wholly and solely concerns themselves, thereby, upon all occasions, inundating their acquaintance with gratuitous advice. All old women complaining of the extravagance of the dress of young women of the present day, forgetting that the window-curtain-looking muslins of their day were far more expensive than the satin and velvet of the present. All old ladies cumbering their sons’ estates with fat jointures, and volunteering to accuse the aforesaid sons of folly or conceit, if they venture to make any improvements or alterations in their own house or lands, by the sapient assertion, “It was good enough for your father, therefore I think it might be good enough for you.” All old women who think that if, like the ostrich, they hide their own heads, no one can see them—*alias*, that every one must believe the hollow professions of their words, however their actions may belie them. All old women who religiously believe that no man is good enough to be their daughter’s husband, and no woman is within a thousand degrees good enough to be their son’s wife, however brutal, profligate, or mediocre that son may be. All old women labouring under the mistake that age and wisdom are synonymous; in short, all old women who think that none but themselves know how to live, because they have evidently forgotten how to die.

INDISCRIMINATES.

All old women, of either sex, detected in the act of reading Shenstone, or crying over the “Sorrows of Werter.” All violent *laudatores temporis acti*, who must, consequently, neglect to read, with due attention, the History of England, or to remember the domestic annals of their own progenitors. All persons thinking that a child’s parents must be its best friends, solely because they ought to be so.

But to particularise all the old women that ought to be suppressed, I should have to pluck a quill from the wing of time, and write the list on the tablets of eternity; therefore I have confined myself to pointing out a few of the most flagrant and urgent cases; I do so without fear, being, I thank my stars,

“Procul à Jove, procul à fulmine;”

both my grandmothers being defunct these twenty years; having no longer before my eyes the fear of Don or Proctor, consequently having no *fellow* feeling to “cow me into quietness; my wife being unequivocally young, as she still wants four months of three-and-twenty; and, above all, I myself holding no office under the *present administration*. What then have I to fear from old women, collectively or individually? Nothing.

With you, my lords and gentlemen, I am aware that it is otherwise. Upon the framing of such a Bill as I propose, no doubt all the suppressed will be ready to exclaim—

“Such a display of municipal power

Has not been since Burdett was sent to the Tower.” (1)

But what of this? It is not, my lords and gentlemen, that you love old women less, but that you love England more! Let me then hope, as a *sincere* patriot, ready, for the good of my country, to take a Curtius leap into the gulf of all the old ladies in the united kingdoms, or, like Regulus, have my lidless eyes exposed to the meridian sun of the antique charms of all the old ladies of the female sex,—that your very first act on the re-meeting of Parliament will be the framing of the Old Woman Suppression Bill; and your petitioner will ever pray that Time may long suspend his *Habeas Corpus* Act with regard to your august persons.

PRODICUS.

“Well, I’m sure,” said the dowager, when Saville had finished reading, “it’s prodigious nonsense; quite impossible to make out what it’s about.”

“I wonder who on earth wrote it! It’s devilish impertinent,” said Herbert—“hang me! if I don’t think there’s a cut at my pamphlet in it.”

“The only fault I find with it,” interposed Mrs. Seymour, “is its impracticability.”

“Nil desperandum!” cried Saville, “for now that we have a young Queen, it is to be hoped old women will get out of fashion, and in England that, you know, is almost synonymous with non-existence.”

“Vaustly rude, silly young man, my dear,” whispered the dowager to Herbert; and then added aloud, “be so good as to ring the bell.”

“By-the-by,” said Fanny, “this is the day we fixed to go and see the dungeons of the Inquisition, and read the names of the poor wretches on the walls that Lord Byron spent two days in recutting; and if we mean to go, we had better do so at once, as it is nearly three now.”

“O hang the Inquisition,” cried Major Nonplus, pushing away

(1) Vide the didactic poem of Punch and Judy.

the dish of empty oyster shells with a sigh, and leaning back in his chair, somewhat exhausted from his late indefatigable exertions; “though all the old rascally Inquisitors are now, thank heaven, dead and gone, yet I should be afraid to put my nose inside one of their infernal dens.”

“A groundless fear that, my dear sir,” said Saville, looking full at the major’s rubicund nose; “for even long before the abolition of the Inquisition they had done away with the torture by fire, therefore could have no motive for detaining *you*, did the institution still exist. Besides,” added he, pointing to the mountain of empty shells, “after having braved an ostracism with impunity, what other tribunal could you dread?”

“Come, come, Master Saville,” said Nonplus, rising to leave the room, “I’ll thank you to be more sparing in your jokes, for one’s not always in the humour for them, do you see—and there’s nothing so ruinous to the constitution as being agitated after eating. What’s the meaning of understanding, sir?—why, digestion; of honour, sir?—digestion (of cold lead); of conscience, sir?—digestion; of patriotism;—digestion of foreign wines, calipash and calipee; of oratory, sir?—why, digestion of other men’s speeches, however heavy they may be; of morality, sir?—why, digestion of legs of mutton at home, instead of discussing ortolans abroad. Have a care then, sir, how, through the levity of an ill-timed jest, you at once endanger a man’s health, understanding, honour, patriotism, and morals.”

“Hear! hear! hear!” cried Saville, as the major made his exit amid peals of laughter, and the rest of the party separated to get ready for the morning’s excursion.

CHAPTER XXI.

Why give you me this shame?
Think you I can a resolution fetch
From flowery tenderness: if I must die,
I will encounter darkness as a bride,
And hug it to my arms.—SHAKESPEARE.

Love is a superstition that doth fear
The idol which itself hath made.—SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

I only know we’ve loved in vain,
I only hear farewell—farewell!—LORD BYRON.

What boots to me your jewell’d crown?—or even
The broad lands of your banner-blazon’d race?
They equal not the gem, now wrested from my heart,
Which in life’s treasury doth outweigh them all.

UNPUBLISHED PLAY.

A WEEK had elapsed since the occurrence of the incidents recorded in the last chapter, during which time Lady De Clifford had

kept her room, not so much from indisposition as from a dread of meeting Mowbray, and a distaste to meeting others. She was at once happier and more wretched than she had ever yet been—happier, in spite of all things, at being loved. O! none but those who have been repulsed, neglected, and ill-treated—who have had every tie and relationship that nature intended for a blessing converted by circumstances into a curse—can know or imagine the resuscitation of heart that follows, when the sunlight of affection has pierced the rigid springs of ice-bound indifference: every feeling seems to dissolve and merge into one; the heart flows calmly on to the murmuring music of its own thoughts; we are happy in the midst of misery; nay, we become of sudden value to ourselves, for are we not the idol of another? Our whole being is like the poet's beautiful description of summer—

“The chequer'd earth seems restless as a flood
Brush'd by the winds. So sportive is the light,
Shot through the boughs, it dances as they dance,
Shadow and sunshine intermingling quick,
And darkening and enlightening (as the leaves
Play wooing) every part.”

Again and again had Julia read Mowbray's letter, till she not only knew it by heart, but knew the identical place where every word was written, and the exact form of every letter; it was her companion night and day, and was only removed from her eyes to be replaced in her bosom. Four days she had passed in this manner, and in repeating aloud in a sort of delirium, “Then he loves me!” To which the poor little starling that he had given her in the cathedral at Milan invariably answered, “E vero, vero;” and from that moment she loved it better than ever. But soon came the waking to this dream. She read the letter for the last time, and dwelt more upon the sort of half prophecy contained in it about her child being taken from her, than on the words of love addressed to herself. A shudder came over her at the thought, but drawing herself calmly up, “No,” said she, proudly, “they dare not do it; but—but if I have for a short time forgotten that I am his wife, Julia, I shall no longer forget that I am your mother. One burning spot glowed on her otherwise deathlike cheek, and her hand trembled slightly as she opened the little watch, and took from it the withered leaf of the water-lily Mowbray had given her at Como.

“I wish he had not seen you,” said she, kissing it; “but as he did, you must go too.” Here a violent flood of tears obliged her to replace the pen in the inkstand, which she had taken up to write a few lines to Mowbray, in returning him his letter—for so she had resolved to do, as she felt she ought not to keep it. Exhausted with the conflict between love and duty, right and wrong, she sank

back in the chair, and remained motionless for nearly an hour, when again rousing herself, she said calmly, "What must be must be, and the sooner it is over the better;" and not trusting herself to look again at Mowbray's letter, she wrote as steadily as she was able with her left hand the following lines:

"Do not suppose that in returning your letter I do so in anger. No, it contains nothing to warrant any feeling of displeasure on my part, beyond, perhaps, the abstract circumstance of its being addressed to me—for which, after all, I can only blame myself; on the contrary, your truth and candour deserve and demand a similar return from me—and they shall have it.

"Know then, weak and culpable as the confession may be, that my utter inability to destroy alone induces me to return it—keep it I dare not,—not because it would be imprudent, but because it would be sinful. Would that I could divest myself of all remembrance of you, as easily as I resign these outward tokens. But, alas! the very effort to forget only rivets afresh every link in the chain of memory—but all that rests with me to do *shall be done*. The little leaf which betrayed to you the secret with which it had been entrusted, I now return; *do not destroy it*—to do so would be useless, for the inscription on it is but a copy, the original is engraven on my heart. I have not stooped to the subterfuge or affectation of denying what accident divulged to you, for I feel that with a nature so generous, so honourable as yours, to show you all the frailty and weakness of my heart is the best way, not only of securing your forbearance, but of obtaining your protection and assistance against myself.

"You talk of remaining with us during the rest of our journey, of being of use, of being a defence to me. Alas! this would be cruel kindness, and 'false reasoning all.' Now that the veil has been rent from our hearts, and the film has fallen from our eyes, what would become of our firmest resolve? How would all our struggles end, were we eternally in each other's society. Of what avail would it be to pray with our lips not to be led into temptation, if we allow our free will to spur us into it on all occasions? No, no, it cannot, must not be—we must part, and that immediately. After what I have written to you, how could I speak to you? Paper does not blush—does not tremble—does not feel. Mowbray, spare all that does; tears that cannot efface guilt would not satisfy love, and they are all I could give you. Your friendship I accept and reciprocate with my whole heart. Before you is a brilliant and honourable career. The Japanese have a tradition, that birds of paradise are transmigrated doves that have died for love; and though their mates never see them again in their transformed state, yet when they hear their note in the sky, it inspires the deserted dove with such intense delight as to make it unable to cease flying in circles through the air for several hours. So it will be with me; I may never see you again, but as your name soars, my spirit will hover round its fame with the only delight it is now capable of knowing. And now, farewell! I do not ask you to burn this, I only wish that you would. That God may ever bless you, will be the constant prayer of your sincere friend,

"JULIA."

It was not till three days after Lady De Clifford had written the foregoing letter that she had courage to send it: she felt that though she did not see him, Mowbray was still under the same roof, and that the moment he got that letter, it would be the knell for his departure: but Fanny having that morning returned "*Picciola*," which she had lent her, Julia had no longer any excuse for detaining it; so accordingly she enclosed her own and Mowbray's letter within its leaves, and sent it back to him.

O what a type of death is it to do anything for the *last* time, especially when the act includes a surrender of all that has constituted our "life of life!" For some hours after Julia had sent back Mowbray's letter, she appeared in a sort of stupor—she could not be said to be thinking even of him, for scarce

"Beat that bosom where his image dwelt
So full, that feeling seem'd almost unfelt."

Her head was leaning languidly on the arm of the sofa, and her hand hanging listlessly at her side, when Fanny entered. "Do, love, try and get into the drawing-room to-day!" said she, kissing her sister's cold pale forehead.

"I really feel unable," said Julia, "for I cannot dress."

"There is no reason why you should dress, dear, for there is no one there, and you never, to my taste, look so well as in one of those very *peignoirs* which you have now on. I think cambric and Mecklin lace so exceedingly becoming—it gives such a delicacy to the complexion;—to be sure your cap is a little crushed, so I'll ring for Berryl to get you that pretty *ambassadrice* of old point and pink ribbons, in which I really think Oberon himself might fall in love with you."

Fanny rang accordingly, and Berryl answered the summons, apparently much excited, and big with some important intelligence.

"Get that pretty *ambassadrice* of Julia's first, Berryl, that I am so fond of," said Fanny, "and then for heaven's sake tell us what is the matter. Has the larch foundation of Venice given way? and are we now all floating on the sea? or, more wonderful still, has Lord De Clifford's mother given you a new silk dress? for something miraculous must have happened, by your face."

"*Hi'm* sure, ma'am," said Berryl, settling the trimming of the cap, and holding it ever and anon at a little distance from her to judge of the effect — "*hi'm* sure, ma'am, you and *hevery* one that knows him must feel glad of it; he's a real gentleman, and will do credit to the name."

"Glad of what? do credit to what name?" interrupted Fanny.

"Why, ma'ma, I was a going to tell you. About an hour ago, a government courier arrived in great haste, asking for the Marquis of Cheveley; the hotel people told him that there was no nobleman here of that name; but Mr. Mowbray's valet coming in at the time, the courier soon made him *hunderstand* that the *hol&* Marquis was dead, and that his master was now Marquis of Cheveley. The courier said he had *halso* got a letter for him from the prime minister; which he wrote in a great hurry, as the carriage was waiting to take him *home* to Windsor, in time for dinner; well, of course, my lady, all we servants was anxious to know how Mr. Mowbray—I mean the Marquis—received his new honours. So we waited till Mr. Sanford came down from taking up the

letters the courier had brought; but would you believe it, ma'am," continued Berryl, turning to Fanny, who was by far her most attentive listener, "he found him with his elbows leaning on the table, and his face buried in his hands, in a sort of stupor like; and although Mr. Sanford called him my lord, and told him that a government courier had brought the letters, he took no notice but to point to the table and say, 'Leave them there.' Now, really, poor dear gentleman—nobleman I mean," said Berryl, correcting herself, in which she was right, for they are not always synonymous—"I do not think he can be quite right, for he has looked dreadfull *hill* this last week to be sure, and I really think he should have medical *hadvice*, 'specially now he 's a Marquis. La, what a fuss, to be sure, Mr. Herbert Grimstone does make about the little miserable bit of health that he has left; for *hif* his little finger only aches, all the doctors in the place are immediately sent for; and I'm sure such a fine, handsome, generous nobleman as the Marquis of Cheveley's health is of much more consequence than his."

"Very just observation," laughed Fanny, who never could resist a joke, especially against the Grimstones. "And now, Berryl, have the goodness to tell Luton to mix some Brussels lace with the blue rosettes on that new Indian muslin dress of mine, as I shall wear it at dinner."

"Wery well, ma'am," replied Berryl, as she folded a white cashmere shawl round Lady De Clifford, who mechanically assisted in the operation, trembling more from agitation than cold.

"Dear me," said Berryl, giving a parting stroke to the shawl, "this reminds me of his lordship's—I mean the Marquis's—generosity; for his lordship—at least Lord De Clifford—never gave me as much as a pin's point, though I'm sure I've *valeted* him *oftener* than his own *valleys*—but that's neither here nor there—but the Marquis says to me the other day—now, in the most *gentlemanest-like* manner possible—now, quite as if I had been a lady—'Mrs. Berryl,' says he, 'I'm afraid you find it cold of nights sitting up with Lady De Clifford.' O dear no, sir! says I (for he was only plain sir, you know, then, ma'am,) for anything I can do for my lady *his* a pleasure. 'That I'm sure it must be,' says he in the *purlitest* manner possible; 'but still, Mrs. Berryl, fearing you may take cold, I must beg your acceptance of this shawl; and with that he gave me the most *beautifulest* green cashmere you eve see in your life, ma'am—much *fitter* for a princess than a servant; indeed my lady admired it so much, that she took it, and gave me her scarlet one instead of it."

There is no knowing how long Berryl might have expatiated on the new Marquis's good qualities, had not Lady De Clifford crimsoned at the allusion, before her quick-sighted sister, to her weak-

ness, in making an exchange with her maid in order to possess herself of Mowbray's gift.

Berryl, perceiving the sudden flush in her mistress's face, exclaimed, "Dear me, my lady, how weak you are still! let me give you a little camphor julap, or you will never be able to get into the drawing-room."

Julia took the proffered restorative, and then, leaning on her sister's arm, walked slowly and feebly into the next room. It was a relief to her to find it empty. Fanny placed her on the sofa, saying, she should go for her work, and return immediately.

"So, then," said Lady De Clifford, as soon as she was alone, "Lord Cheveley is dead. *He* will now want no excuse to go; it is fortunate—very fortunate, very:" and she burst into a paroxysm of tears, and buried her face in her handkerchief. The door opened, and a footstep advanced softly. If Julia thought at all, she thought it was Fanny; and, without uncovering her face, she put out her hand and said, "Do let me go back; I am too ill, love, to stop here."

Instead of the gentle remonstrance or acquiescence that she expected, she felt her waist encircled, and a thousand burning kisses imprinted on her forehead. She started up, and perceiving Lord Cheveley, gave a faint scream, and sank again upon the sofa.

"Julia," said he, flinging himself passionately at her feet, and seizing her hand, "we have no time for anger, nor even for accusation or defence. To-morrow, before this time, I shall have left you—to borrow your own words—perhaps *for ever*! And will you, can you anticipate that doomed hour by spurning me from you now? Am I not punished—have I not suffered enough? This last wretched, wretched week, I have begun my impossible lesson of trying to live without you. You think the death too slow a one, and you would kindly hasten it. Be it so then. The few remaining hours that intervene between our eternal separation shall not be made tedious to you by my presence."

He rose as he spoke, and moved one step towards the door. Julia saw, heard, felt nothing but that he was going—going in sorrow, if not in anger. Duty, pride—*womanly* pride, all gave way, and grasping his arm convulsively with one hand as her other arm encircled his neck, and her head sank upon his shoulder, she sobbed out, "Pity—hate—despise: but do not, do not leave me *now*."

"O blessed, blessed words!" said he, raising her head, and for the first time pressing his lips to hers; but they were as cold as ice, for she had fainted. He laid her gently on the sofa. "Wretch that I am!" exclaimed he, as he untied the strings of her cap, and parted the hair on her polished brow,—*"thus eternally to sacrifice her to my selfishness. But to-morrow—yes, to-morrow, the*

struggle will be ended. She will be at peace; and no matter what becomes of me. Sweet soul! wert thou indeed fled, who could, who dared keep that loved form from me? And all cold and lifeless though it might be, yet would I not exchange it for all the living loveliness earth could produce."

His ravings were here interrupted by Fanny's return.

Lord Cheveley rose precipitately from the side of the couch where he had been kneeling, and arranging his hair so as to hide his face in some degree, stammered out,

"Dear Miss Neville, I fear Lady De Clifford must have been more ill than we had any idea of, from her extreme weakness; in rising to—to speak to me just now, she fainted."

"She *has* been *very* ill; but *you* also look ill and agitated," replied Fanny, with a penetrating glance.

"O, only a few natural tears at my poor uncle's death," said he, colouring.

"True; that reminds me that I have not yet congratulated *Lord Cheveley*;" and Fanny put out her hand, upon which the young Marquis imprinted a kiss.

"Dear Julia," said Fanny, rubbing her sister's temples with eau-de-cologne, "she is, indeed, terribly weak. I'm sorry I persuaded her to come in here."

"After the first exertion, I should rather say that it would be of use to her," remarked Lord Cheveley, who did not like to acquiesce in anything likely to lead to Julia's again leaving the room.

"Perhaps so," returned Fanny, "for she is now beginning to revive. Have the goodness to open the window; she will be the better for the air."

When Julia came to herself, she was for some minutes unconscious of what had happened, or even of where she was, till, seeing Fanny and Lord Cheveley bending over her, the sudden recollection of all that had taken place previous to her sister's return suffused her face with crimson. She made an effort to rise, which Cheveley perceiving, and fearing that if she once left the room she would not return while he remained, he gently took her hand, and said, with as unconcerned a manner as he could assume, "Dear Lady De Clifford, you have no idea how I reproach myself for being the cause of your so far exerting yourself as to rise just now. I would have taken all your congratulations and good wishes for granted, I assure you. I was just going," continued he, smiling, "to show you a letter I got from Melford; I think it will amuse you. Certainly the Jesuits never tried harder for proselytes than the Whigs do; though it must be confessed they have not the art of retaining them when made, owing perhaps, to their Roman magnanimity in courting their enemies and neglecting their friends."

Julia took the proffered letter with a trembling hand, and without

daring to raise her eyes : enclosed in it was a slip of paper, on which were written the following lines :—

“ Who could bear that fond letters so sacred as thine
Should encounter the gaze of the worldly, the cold?
No ! the flame hath consumed every heart-prompted line,
And those records of love I no more shall behold.

“ Each phrase well remember’d I witness’d effaced ;
Thy loved name by my lips press’d again and again ;
O ! no more let thy feelings’ expression be traced,
For ’twas death to destroy what I dare not retain.”

When she had read them she did raise her eyes, and cast one look at Lord Cheveley full of gratitude and esteem, as she placed the lines in her bosom, and handed the premier’s letter over to Fanny, begging she would read it out, as she could not very well decipher the hand. Lord Melford’s letter was dated Downing-street, and private : it ran as follows :—

“ MY DEAR MARQUIS,—In being the first to congratulate you upon your accession to a title, which, distinguished as it has already been, will, I feel, derive additional lustre from its present possessor, may I venture to hope, that with the other honours of my late noble friend, the mantle of his political principles may also have descended to you. In this wish I am graciously joined by the highest personage in the realm.

“ Lord Denham returned from Russia immediately after the death of the king ; his object is nearer home. Great changes have taken place in the colonies ; the governor-generalship is not yet disposed of. I have no hesitation in saying that the next vacant garter will accompany the office ; but as I hope soon to see you, these matters are best discussed personally, especially as the courier only waits for this letter to start, which barely gives me time to assure you, my dear Marquis, that I am ever

“ Faithfully yours, “ MELFORD.”

“ Which, being interpreted,” said Fanny, “ means, that if you will, like a good boy, go out to Canada, or do anything else they please, it shall have a pretty blue ribbon, so it shall.”

“ No, no,” said Cheveley, smiling, “ I rather think they have got a troublesome customer in Denham, and it would be as well to have me as a cat’s-paw, to pretend that I have been promised whatever he wants,—no matter what : but I am very certain Canada is not further from England than it is from his wishes ; nor is Halifax so near it,” added he, laughing, “ that they should imagine there was so much of the captain bold about me as that I should favour them with the pleasing variation of hanging myself in their garters ; however, as I see that precious document is marked private, I must beg of you not to mention the contents to anybody.”

“ Now, pray, where can you have lived ever since your *entrée* into this best of all possible worlds,” said Fanny, “ to ask or expect that women should keep a secret ?”

“ In the world,” replied he, “ where I have invariably found that they are the only people who can.”

"Well," said Fanny, laughing. "I have long intended working you a waistcoat, and now I'll delay it no longer, for that very just observation of yours: it shall be full of little secret, unfindoutable, mysterious pockets, against the time when you join the Whigs, and turn diplomatist."

"Well, who knows," said Lord Cheveley, smiling, "*tutte le gran facende si fanno di poco cosa!* But I hope your waistcoat will never be worn by a turncoat."

Here the door opened suddenly, and Herbert Grimstone, without apparently noticing that Lady De Clifford and Fanny were in the room, rushed up to Lord Cheveley, and nearly wringing his hand off, breathlessly exclaimed—

"'Pon my soul, my dear fellow, I congratulate you with all my heart. I hear you've a letter from Melford. Has he offered you anything? What does he say—eh?"

"Not much," replied Lord Cheveley, coldly; "at all events the letter is private, and chiefly on the subject of my uncle's death."

"Oh—ah—yes—certainly—anything about Denham in it?" probed Herbert.

"Only that he has returned from Russia, and is now in England; but I fear we are making poor Lady De Clifford's head ache," added Lord Cheveley, turning haughtily away from his selfish interrogator, who had been standing with his hat on, his arms folded, and his back to Julia, whom he had not yet condescended to notice.

By-the-by, the Lyonesse always wear their hats when they are going to be hanged. Who knows but there may be something infectious in the custom?

"I beg you a thousand pardons, my dear Julia," said he, turning suddenly round, "I cannot tell you how anxious I have been about you, nor the delight it gives me," added he, kissing her hand, "to see you perfectly recovered from your accident."

And then, without waiting for any reply to so much affectionate solicitude, he again turned round to Lord Cheveley, and for a moment raising his hat, to run his fingers through his hair, said—

"So, Denham is actually returned, is he? When do you go to England, my dear fellow?"

"To-morrow."

"To-morrow!" reiterated Herbert; "by Jove, I've a great mind to go with you."

"I never travel with any man but Saville," said Lord Cheveley, repulsively, "for they bore me to death."

"Civil!" thought Herbert, as he left the room in quest of his brother, to tell him that he thought Mowbray had become deucedly pompous and impertinent since he had grown into a marquis, and to inform him of Lord Denham's arrival from the north, and

his opinion of the expediency of his and his brother's immediate return to England, to see what was to be done, or, in other words, what was to be got : but Lord De Clifford said he could not possibly return to England without first going on to Naples, as Captain Datchet was to meet them there at the end of the month ; and Herbert, recollecting that he was also *chargé d'affaires* from the chest of Miss Mac Screw, was fain to agree to the measure.

That day poor Julia had to endure the successive congratulations of the whole party upon her recovery from her *accident*, and to consent to remain in the drawing-room, as dinner had been ordered there on her account.

Lord Cheveley had also to endure the individual and combined congratulations of everybody, and to engage, *nolens volens*, in alternate political discussions with Lord De Clifford and Herbert, who could not understand a man's being so apparently insensible and apathetic under the yet infant acquisition of a marquise, two hundred thousand a-year, immense political influence, and doubtless the choice of the highest offices in the state.

"But surely, my dear fellow," said Herbert, with his mouth full of *chartreuse*, and a half-sipped glass of barley-water in his hand, "in the position you now stand, you will not think of continuing a Tory?"

"And why not?" replied Cheveley; "if, when I might have wanted something, my principles were not to be swayed or shaken by self-interest, it is not likely that, now I can possibly want nothing, I should voluntarily relinquish them."

"No, I do n't mean exactly upon the score of self-interest," shrugged Herbert; "but you see it's quite impossible that the Tories can ever rally as a party, or that England can ever again be governed on Tory principles."

"Very likely not by a faction bearing that worn-out name; but the time must come, and that shortly, when the country will rebel against being governed by no principles at all, which is at present the case."

"You forget, my dear Cheveley," said Saville, in his own peculiarly dry manner, "that the Whigs can always take refuge in their philosophy, which is about the soundest in the world, being that of Confucius; and you know one of his maxims is, that 'a man ought to change often, if he would be constant to wisdom;' and another, that 'in the state wherein we are, perseverance in well-doing consists not so much in not falling, as to rise again as often as we fall;' and nobody can deny the dexterity which the Whigs have evinced in this particular of late."

"Jesting apart, my dear Saville," replied Cheveley, "the first maxim contains the quintessence of truth; for which reason, no really honest politician (always supposing there be such a thing)

can be a party man ; for inasmuch as no set of men are infallible, neither can their measures be so ; consequently, whoever unconditionally pledges himself to a party, must pledge himself to voting, nine times out of ten, against his conscience."

"Well, but you will allow," interposed Herbert, "that there never was an administration so completely popular—that is, which so entirely studied the rights and privileges of the people."

"I allow no such thing," said Lord Cheveley ; "for I do not think they by any means act up to the *soi-disant* principles that brought them into office :—*imprimis*, in my estimate of the people, I include the inhabitants of the sister kingdom ; and how their interests have been cared for, the conduct of the Whig government upon the Irish appropriation clause, during Sir Robert Peel's administration, and their subsequent measures upon that same clause, under their own auspices, during the last session, will best testify. True, ever since the Union, Ireland has been treated as the wife of England ; and, consequently, is expected to endure, without murmur, struggle, or retaliation, whatever insults, injuries, and oppressions her manly and patriotic spouse, Mr. John Bull, may choose to inflict upon her, while he passes for a very fine fellow in the world, as long as he rants about his own and his brother-man's liberties in England."

"Which liberties," said Saville, "appear to me to be poised on the same basis as the Harrow boys' right to Mr. Newcome's fruit."

"And what might that be?" asked Lord De Clifford, sneeringly.

"Why," replied Saville, "poor Newcome's garden adjoined the school-house at Harrow : the consequence was, that it was stripped of its fruit even before it was ripe ; whereupon, tired of applying to the masters for redress to no purpose, he at length appealed to the boys ; and sending for the head of the sixth form to his house, he said to him, 'Now, my good fellow, I'll make an agreement with you and your companions—let my fruit remain on the trees till it becomes ripe, and I promise to give you half.' The boy, assuming an ambassadorial dignity of deliberation, coolly replied, 'I can say nothing to the proposition myself, sir, but I will make it known to the rest of the boys, and inform you of their decision to-morrow.' Well, to-morrow came, and with it this reply, 'The gentlemen of Harrow cannot agree to receive so unequal a share, since Mr. Newcome is an individual, and they are many.' Now I leave you, my good friends," concluded Saville, "to draw a corollary between the numerous gentlemen of the people and the individual gentleman or lady upon the throne."

"Oh ! if you did but know, or could but imagine," said Fanny, yawning, "how sick I am of those eternal politics, you would have mercy on me, and talk sense, pay compliments, or quote poetry."

"Well," said Saville, laughing, "I will try to obey you ; but to

talk sense when a pretty woman is at one's side is not so easy ; and as to paying compliments, with you for their object, they would never end ; and then for poetry ;—but yes, as this dinner is not served *à la Russe*, with the fruit on the table, I think old Herrick can help me to a stanza—to you, sweet ladies all, I say—

‘ Ye may simper, blush, and smile,
And perfume the air awhile ;’

and to the confectionary,” continued he, bowing to the table, “I can only add—

‘ But, *sweet* things, you must be gone,
Fruit you know is coming on.”

“And so is something better, too,” said Cheveley, kissing little Julia, who had just come into the room and clambered on his knee, as was her wont.

“Do you know what they told me,” said the child, throwing her little arms round his neck ; “but I did n’t believe it, and now I see I was right. There, stoop down your pretty little ear, and I’ll tell you. Well, they told me you were not Mr. Mowbray any more—my own dear kind Augustus Mowbray ; but that you were Lord Cleveley, or Lord Something ; and Mademoiselle d’Antoville said, I was not to climb up upon your knee and tease you ; but that I was to make you a low curtsy, and say, ‘ Monsieur le Marquis, je vous en félicite de tout mon cœur ;’” and here the little thing pursed up her mouth, raised her eyebrows, and lowered her eyelids, in imitation of her governess, which set every one laughing but her father, who said—

“I’m sure Mademoiselle d’Antoville would tell you not to be so loud and so rude, if she were here, Julia.”

“Yes, papa, but thank goodness she is not here ; so, Monsieur le Marquis, je vous en félicite de tout mon cœur,” laughed the child, mimicking Mademoiselle d’Antoville more accurately than before, and burying her face on Lord Cheveley’s shoulder in a peal of laughter, in which every one joined except her sire, who cried out in an angry voice—

“Come, come, Julia, if you do n’t know how to behave yourself, you had better go to bed.”

From this she knew there was no appeal, and the poor little thing was preparing reluctantly to obey, when Lord Cheveley interposed.

“Nay,” said he, “as I go to-morrow, I must request, as an especial favour, that I and my little friend here are not separated so soon.”

“Go to-morrow !” said the child ; “where are you going ?”

“To England,” replied he, with a sigh.

“O, then, we are all going,” cried the little girl, clapping her hands ; “I’m so glad !”

"No, not all—only me," replied Cheveley.

The poor child's joy was now turned to sorrow, and she sobbed audibly as she said,

"And is Prince going too—poor Prince?"

"Yes, you know I could as soon leave my heart behind as leave Prince."

"Then do leave your heart behind—make him leave his heart and Prince with us, mamma?" said the child, innocently turning to the sofa where her mother was lying.

"Come here, Julia," said Lady De Clifford, "you are teasing Lord Cheveley;" and she hid her own blushing face against her child's, as she stooped down and whispered to her to be quiet, or her papa would send her to bed.

"It is time for you to call her to order, I think," said Lord De Clifford, as he rose from table, and offered his arm to his mother, when they left the room together.

When the dessert was taken away and the table removed, Saville begged for some music. While he, Fanny, and Mrs. Seymour were turning over the contents of the music-stand, Major Nonplus buttoned up his coat, and fussing up to Lord Cheveley, who had drawn his chair beside Lady De Clifford's sofa, began apologising for, and regretting, an indispensable engagement that called him away. It was really provoking that upon the last evening of his lordship's being in their circle, and the first of her ladyship's being able again to join it, he should be compelled to absent himself; but," added he, "I assure you, you cannot regret it so much as I do."

"That I am convinced of," said Lord Cheveley, smiling, as he shook hands and wished him good-bye.

After the major's departure, and the laugh that followed it had subsided, an embarrassing silence ensued, which Cheveley broke by saying to Fanny,

"Do, Miss Neville, have the goodness to sing that beautiful duet of Millar's, 'Loved friend, awake thy song.'"

"With pleasure," replied Fanny; "how very beautiful some of his music is!—it is so perfectly adapted to the words."

"So it is," said Cheveley; "I am a great admirer of his compositions; but did you ever hear his wife sing?"

"No," said Fanny; "does she sing well?"

"*Well* is not the word. She has about the most exquisite voice I ever heard; it is so soft, so silvery, so clear. Her upper notes always give me the idea of a waterfall trickling through sunbeams. And then she is so delicately and gracefully pretty, that one's eyes are almost as much feasted as one's ears. One of the greatest musical feasts I ever had was hearing her and her sister, Mrs. Bishop, sing together."

“ Dear me, you quite make me envy you,” said Fanny.

“ Well, will you, in revenge, let *me* envy *you* by hearing you sing? asked Cheveley.

And accordingly Fanny, and Saville, who had a deep, rich, mellow voice, sang the beautiful duet that Lord Cheveley had asked for. When they came to the last verse,

. “ When in days long past,
I listened to thy song, too beautiful to last,”

Cheveley involuntarily raised his eyes to Lady De Clifford's, and mechanically repeated the words, “ *too beautiful to last.*”

The exquisite harmony of the last cadence had died away some minutes before he was sufficiently collected to ask them to sing something else;—with which they good-humouredly complied, by singing that sweet thing from one of Blangini's Notturmi,—“ *Amor che nasce.*” Even had Julia and Lord Cheveley been alone, their hearts were too full to speak.

“ Men shadow out the truth when they are sad.
They say but ill, who tell us that grief speaks
In household phrases.”—BARRY CORNWALL.

But it was not then, while they were filling their hearts with last looks of each other, that they felt all the agony of grief which fate had prepared for them. Love is truly a child, to whom the present is all;—who plays, and even sleeps, on the brink of a precipice; and feels neither its danger nor its desolation, till it awakes and finds itself *alone*!—and that truth—faith—all save memory—has flown. Though neither Cheveley nor Julia could speak themselves, everything else seemed to speak for them: even Monsieur de Rivoli, who had taken up a guitar, and twanged people into asking him to sing, sang, with rather more feeling than usual, that charming little French romance, “ *On peut fuir sans oublier!*” When he had finished, little Julia said to Lord Cheveley, “ Do let poor Prince come up, as it is the last evening, to wish us good-bye?”

“ *On peut fuir sans oublier,*” said he, abstractedly, parting the child's hair.

“ Yes, I know,” replied she, “ that dogs never forget—but may he come up?”

“ Certainly,” said Cheveley, recollecting himself, and colouring as he rose to ring the bell.

The dog was ordered, and five minutes afterwards the poor animal came bounding into the room, and, as if aware that it was paying a farewell visit, it seemed to lavish its caresses doubly upon every one,—but especially upon Lady De Clifford, who had always been kind to it: it placed its paws upon her shoulders, and nestled its cold nose into her neck. In stooping to return its caresses, a small Trichinopoly chain that she wore round her neck got entan-

gled in the dog's collar, and the clasp giving way by the animal suddenly jumping on the ground, he remained in possession of the chain, which his master perceiving, disentangled, and dexterously concealed it; then stooping to pat Prince and calling him a good dog, he said, in a low voice, inaudible to every one but the one it was intended for, "Not a link is broken, nor ever shall be." But time, relentless time, who is fate's Mercury, knocks at every door, heedless whether the tidings he brings be life or death, weal or woe; and his iron tongue now tolled midnight. One after another the party had dropped off, till only Cheveley and Lady De Clifford, Fanny and Saville, remained. The two latter parted from their friend, loading him with a thousand good wishes; but neither he nor Julia spoke one word. He was to leave Venice at six in the morning: her door closed on him. Was it *for ever*?

Julia sat by her window the whole of that night. Morning at length dawned; it was dull and cold, accompanied by a deluge of rain. She felt grateful that the very clouds seemed to sympathise with her. Soon she heard the murmur of voices on the landing beneath her windows. Sanford and Prince stood at the entrance of the gondola; presently Lord Cheveley appeared—he looked pale and haggard; he pulled his travelling-cap over his eyes as he entered. The coffin-like boat, the gondola, pushed off, and Julia saw him *no more*!

* * * * *

The noon of that day found Lady De Clifford in a high fever; and it was a month before she was sufficiently recovered to allow the party to pursue their journey to Naples.

CHAPTER XXII.

Look you, Bill, some hanimals is more difficult to poison nor others, 'specially if they are wenomously hinclined, and fond of the world like.—RATCATCHER'S DIARY.

We are all of us deceived at times, and those who do not know as much are the more deceived.—ZIMMERMAN.

I have (though a tolerably good philosopher) but a low opinion of *Platonic* love. For which reason I thought it necessary to give my fair readers a caution against it; observing, to my great concern, the waist of a Platonist lately swell to a roundness that is inconsistent with that philosophy.—STEELE.

"A gentleman of a pacific temperament, but who had somehow or other managed to incur a kicking, excused it by very forcibly arguing that a 'man can no more help what is done behind his back than what is said.'"

BEAUTIFUL Naples! whose sapphire waves flow on in music, and whose flower-breathed air laughs out in sunshine, as though primeval Eden's youth still lingered on thy shores, mocking at sin and time—beautiful Naples! Venus of cities, rising from the sea,

begirt with beauty like a zone, and diadem'd with palaces, shall I ever again behold you? No, never!—at least as I beheld you once; for to the winter of the heart no second spring succeeds.

The journey to Naples had been performed by slow and easy stages; still Lady De Clifford was so weak, that they had been there a month before she felt equal to taking a drive.

Their apartments at the “Victoria” faced the Villa Reale, and the only progress she had made towards convalescence was having her chair wheeled to the window, and inhaling the air of its delicious gardens. There she would sit for hours, without enjoying or apparently noticing anything; even the puppet-show, penny-trumpet sound of the signal for the half dozen odds and ends of men that composed the guard, to turn out when the king or queen passed, did not rouse her; the only objects she seemed to distinguish from others were when that gorgeous mockery of death, a Neapolitan funeral, passed under her window, and then she looked wistfully at the crimson velvet pall, and eagerly after the hideous masks that followed it: indeed she had become such a complete wreck, that the dowager had frequently taken occasion of late to impress upon her son, that now his wife had taken to low spirits and ill health, it became doubly incumbent on him, as soon as he returned to England, to make arrangements for living *ong gorson*,—in other words, sending his wife quietly into the country to vegetate by herself: and soon everything was arranged to the complete satisfaction of both mother and son, even to the plausible excuse that was to be resorted to on the occasion, which was, that, with the expenses of an approaching election in view, he could not afford the *frais* of a London establishment, and, besides, the country was better for Julia's health and education.

O for a forty Tartuffe power to sing thy praise, hypocrisy! Time was, when this arrangement, as it would necessarily include the removal of Mademoiselle d'Antoville also, would not have been so easily acceded to on the part of Lord De Clifford; but, (must we confess it?) during the month, he had been at Naples,—

“A grenadier, as you shall hear,
A much fiercer, taller man,”

Count Campobello by name, had been more constant in his visits to Mademoiselle than Lord De Clifford thought consistent with her professed devotion to him; nay, one night at the San Carlino, he could have almost sworn that he overheard the count call her “mia cara Laura;” but this his Laura positively denied; nay, she got quite indignant at the bare supposition of such a thing, cried, pouted, and whimpered a great deal about the hardship of not being able to see such a very old friend as Giovanni Campobello, without being so calumniated, and that too by the man she adored!

Nevertheless, the more Lord De Clifford was adored, the more

he obstinately persisted in thinking that the count's visits were a great deal too frequent, and his face a great deal too young, and much too handsome for an old friend : in short, beginning to suspect that there was truth in the Chevalier de Parny's assertion,

“ Que les sermens sont un mensonge,
Que l'amour trompe tôt ou tard,
Que l'innocence n'est qu'un art,
Et que le bonheur n'est qu'un songe,”

he had serious thoughts of becoming moral, and breaking off that *liaison*. Miles Datchet had been a week at Naples previous to Lord De Clifford's arrival. Herbert was profuse in thanks, as far as words went, for his success with Miss Mac Screw, though Major Nonplus put in his claim for some of them by then confessing that he had written to Miss Mac Screw, and attributing her change of conduct entirely to the force and urgency of his appeal ;—not that he meant to say that Datchet was not a monstrous clever fellow ; he had had experience of it before now, for, when he knew him in the commissariat in Spain in 1823, he used to convert all the Empecinado's pigs into Bayonne hams in the most miraculous manner. The dowager, too, was well satisfied with Datchet, or rather with the letter he had brought her from Mr. Tymmons, stating that Hoskins was gradually taming, that Rushworth farm was draining and re-thatching, and consequently that Farmer Jenkins was silenced at last.

“ Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting in the king's gate,” was the feeling of Lord De Clifford when he heard that the Lees were unmanageable, and that the plot about Richard Brindal had utterly failed. It was too bad that he, who had been “ foaming a patriot ” all his life in the hope of “ subsidizing a peer,” could not effectually crush or cajole that miserable family, so as to prevent the chance of their being troublesome to him at the next election. But doubtless he, with his mother's assistance, would be able to concoct some other plot for that purpose before the time arrived. Datchet had also been the bearer of good tidings to Saville—no less than letters containing his father's consent to his marriage with Fanny. At any other time this would have occasioned unalloyed happiness, but now, in spite of it, Fanny appeared to have a gloom over her spirits for the first time in her life. The fact was, in her close attendance upon her sister during her late illness, she discovered the cause of it ; and though she had always deeply felt for Julia's unhappy lot, yet she thought, and thought rightly, that she had never been utterly and irremediably wretched till now. Of her principles she did not for a moment entertain a single doubt, but she saw that they would be preserved at the expense of her life. Saville's love and pride might both have been wounded by Fanny's depression of spirits at the

time, when at length every obstacle to their union had been removed, had he not, from his own observation of the alteration that had taken place in Lord Cheveley before his departure from Venice, been led to suspect the position in which he and Lady De Clifford stood towards each other; and although he had too much delicacy to hint at it to Fanny, yet it perfectly enabled him not only to understand, but to sympathise in, her unwonted gloom.

Lady De Clifford was sitting one morning as usual at the window, a few days previous to their return to England, with Fanny in the room, affecting to draw, but in reality watching every change in her sister's face, when little Julia ran into the room; but checking herself at the sight of her mother's pale and suffering face, she walked gently up to her on tiptoe, and throwing her arms round her neck, said—"Dear mamma, I have never yet shown you the pretty bracelets Lord Cheveley left for me the day he went away—that nasty day—I hate it!"

And the child held up a pair of emerald and diamond bracelets, the design of which was a wreath of myrtle, the leaves done in emeralds, and the blossoms and buds in brilliants and rubies. Seeing her eyes fixed on the bracelets, and imagining the train of thought they were likely to awaken, Fanny threw down her pencil.

"Come, Julia," said she, "the day is so lovely, that I must insist upon your taking a drive. Here have we been for a whole month or more; in a few days we return to England, and yet you have not once gone to see your old favourite, the point that stretches out by Baja, at the end of the Strada Nuova. I'll give up my ride to-day, and so, *cara*, you positively must drive with me."

So saying, Fanny rang the bell. "What sort of day is it out?" inquired she of the servant who answered it?"

"Very fine, ma'am."

"Any wind?"

"Not much, ma'am, and the little there is is very warm."

"Very well, then, order the open carriage round directly, and tell Berryl to bring Lady De Clifford's bonnet and shawls here immediately, and Luton to bring mine."

"May I go, mamma?" said little Julia earnestly.

"I do not think I am able to go love."

"When, when am I to take a drive with my own mamma again, then?" pouted the little girl, for I am so tired of walking in the Villa Reale, or driving alone on the Campo, with Mademoiselle D'Antoville; and then that horrid great tall Count Campobello always comes and teases me and talks Neapolitan to me, that I cannot understand. *Do, do*, dear mamma, go out to-day, and take me with you."

What mother ever yet resisted the "*do, do*" of a child, when

there was no harm in acceding to it? So Lady De Clifford allowed Berryl to put on her things, and, leaning on Fanny while Julia took possession of her other hand, suffered them to lead her to the carriage.—Deep indeed must be the gloom which the balm and beauty of a Neapolitan day does not chase away; but it did not chase away Lady De Clifford's, for there is a prostration of strength that accompanies deep affliction, which, while it partially annihilates our corporeal nature, seems to give additional vitality to our minds, till it overwhelms us with a painful sense of our own identity, that destroys the influence of external objects.

“Which way would you rather go, dearest?” asked Fanny, “through Pausilipo and so on to Fuzaro, or on the Strada Nuova?”

“Whichever way you like, love,” replied Lady De Clifford, with a mournful smile, “for I am not such an epicure as the Neapolitan galley-slave, who at his execution called for a glass of water, and when it was brought to him reproached the priest with, *Padre, non è nevata.*”

At all events this speech was iced, for it struck a chill to poor Fanny's heart, from the reckless and desponding tone in which it was uttered. During the rest of the drive, all her efforts to arouse and amuse her sister were equally fruitless; and seeing that the air appeared to exhaust rather than revive her, they returned home. Time, which robs, alone can restore, thought Fanny, as she silently and sorrowfully ascended the large dirty staircase at the Victoria, that led to her own room. But Fanny was wrong; Time may heal, but it *never restores*; for our finest feelings are like Venice glasses, which once destroyed can never be cemented, and the fragments are shunned by our best *friends* (?) as useless, if not dangerous.

* * * * *

The 6th of December, 18—, was an eventful night at Naples. Vesuvius poured forth its burning flood in mightier torrents than it had done for years. The dear good old Archbishop of Tarento's favourite black cat “Otello” died, and Mr. Herbert Grimstone, who (as we have before stated) was a homœopathist, had nearly killed himself by accidentally taking the poisonous viaticum, intended to be consumed in three months, at

. “One fell swoop.

The why, the where, what boots it now to tell” of how all this happened?—yet, surely, as a young gentleman who set such a value upon himself, though his life was by no means proportioned to his *assurance*, must be of some value in the eyes of others, we will relate it.

Major Nonplus, that “head and front” of everybody's “offence,” had deputed Mr. Wood to send him from Sicily three pipes of Marsala; but as in England Marsala is “of no account,” he de-

terminated, though no conjuror, to convert it into sherry; and in order to give it a fine flavour of the Borraccha, he deposited half a pair of boots in each butt: when he deemed that it had acquired a twang that even a Spaniard would mistake for Xeres, he persuaded or rather over-persuaded Herbert in an evil hour to taste what he called some very fine sherry that he was taking over for his friend Lord Cramwell. Now, everybody knows that two of a trade can never agree, and the poison called wine is incompatible with that calling itself homœopathy. And although foxglove has attained a high place in medicine, and often has a hand in curing diseases, yet dog-skin, especially when transformed into old boots, could not be expected, when interfering with the homœopathic system, to do anything but put its foot into it; consequently, shortly after Herbert had retired to rest he felt so exceedingly ill, that he darted out of bed, like a shot, in search of one of his powders, and, deceived by the treacherous glimmer of the rush-light, he made the just recorded fatal mistake; but soon the violent ringing of his bell summoned first his servant, who in his turn brought a physician and a stomach-pump, and eventually his mother, brother, Saville, and Major Nonplus, to the rescue. Great was the shock his tender parent received on entering the room, at beholding what she thought her son's headless trunk standing perpendicularly against the wall; but it was only the clothes he had taken off, the shoulders, breast, arms, hips, and calves of which, being thoroughly well padded, became a practical noun substantive, and stood alone. On the mantel-piece appeared a sort of embryo apothecary's shop, so full was it of phials, pill-boxes, lint, plasters, and boxes of Seidlitz powders. A great many shawls lay upon the arm of the sofa, and in the centre of it was an air-cushion; the toilette still breathed more of the laboratory than the perfumer's, for stethoscopes and respirators jostled eau mignonne and crème de sultane; but the chaos of the writing-table at once proclaimed the man of genius—here lay a glove-box despoiled of half its contents—there, two or three cambric pocket-handkerchiefs soaking up some ink, which, in the *vividavis animæ* of genius, had been spilt; at one corner were the Allegories of Apuleius, and the Dialogues of Plato, buried under a ream of the “Westminster Review;” while at another was the “De Rerum Naturâ” of Lucretius, wedged in between “Locke on Civil Government” and “Reid on the Mind.” The rest of the table was occupied with modern French novels and plays, especially that of “*Abel dans le costume du temps* :” but surmounting his invaluable work on “Timbuctoo” was a half-written pamphlet, with “*Ne Hercules quidem adversus duos*” for its motto, and the Greek word λαός, or “the people,” to whom certainly the whole affair would be Greek, occurring in every fourth line; but, with that

versatility which genius ever possesses, on the opposite page he had commenced a French madrigal, beginning—

“Belle et charmante Zélie, toi qui m’adore;”

but where was the genius of the place? sitting in a bergère, night-capped and dressing-gowned into a semblance of life, but still looking more like death in masquerade.

“God bless my soul,” said Major Nonplus, in a disappointed voice, as if angry at having been got out of bed by a falsehood, “why, they told me you were dead!”

“So I am, very nearly,” gasped Herbert.

“My dear fellow, what have you done?” inquired his brother, bending over him.

“For myself I’m afraid,” replied Herbert.

“My dear, my dear, don’t talk so, pray,” said his mother; and then turning to the English physician, who was counting his pulse, and looking at his watch, added, “I need not, I’m sure, say, doctor, that if you recover him from this *here* dangerous attack, no *d’argent* shall be spared on my part.”

“I am happy to tell your ladyship,” said the doctor, “that I consider Mr. Grimstone now out of danger, and have no doubt that in a few days he will be as well as ever, and able to travel.”

“Yes, my dear mamma, I feel a great deal better already; but, pray, sit down, for you don’t look well. I wish you would try the homœopathic system.”

“God bless me, my dear,” said the dowager, darting full three yards from her son, as if she had been galvanised, “do you want to poison me too?”

“Heaven forbid, my dearest mamma, for your will has ever been my study, and I should not wish you to do anything you did not like.”

“Humph!” muttered the major, pulling down little avalanches of his sugar-loaf mountain of a cotton nightcap over his ears—“many a true word said in jest—I don’t doubt but her *will* has always been your study.”

“I’m sure, doctor,” resumed her ladyship, “you will agree with me in the things I tell Herbert he ought to avoid and never eat—pepper, cucumbers, cold feet, thorough draughts, and the heat of the sun.”

How he was to eat cold feet, thorough draughts, and the heat of the sun, was not exactly plain to the doctor’s capacity; therefore was his politeness the greater in telling her ladyship that he perfectly agreed with her. Saville, who had been remarkably kind, and really anxious about Herbert during the first two hours that they were assembled in his room, could not, now that he was pronounced out of all danger, resist a smile at his rueful appearance.

“I fear,” said Herbert, languidly, “I never shall be fit for anything again.”

“O don’t despair,” replied Saville; “you’ll make a very good outline of an ambassador yet.”

“I don’t quite understand what you mean by that,” said Herbert.

“Why,” resumed Saville, smiling, “I was thinking of the old story of the Duc de Choiseul, who was so remarkably thin, that when he came to London to negotiate a peace, Charles Townshend, on being asked whether the French government had sent the preliminaries of a treaty, answered he did not know—but they had sent the *outline* of an ambassador.”

“My feet are so dreadfully cold,” said Herbert, not liking to join in a laugh against himself, “that I should like to have a carriage muff.”

Lord De Clifford, remembering that there were generally two or three in Mademoiselle d’Antoville’s room, volunteered to go for one. Although it was now past three in the morning, he entered that lady’s sanctum without the ceremony of knocking, naturally supposing that she had been in bed hours before, dreaming of him; what, then, was his surprise, upon opening the door, to find the candles lighted on the table, and upon looking athwart the gloom, to see Count Campobello’s tall figure seated on the sofa, and on his knee, with one arm conjugally encircling his neck, sat Mademoiselle d’Antoville. The room was large, and carpeted à *l’Italienne*—that is to say, covered with green baize, and a quantity of straw laid under it, so that Lord De Clifford being *en pantoufle*, his footsteps fell noiselessly. Giving one more look to convince himself that the tableau before him was no optical illusion, he took one of the candles, and quietly walking over to the unconscious pair, rudely seized his hitherto adored Laura by the arm, and, flinging her to the other end of the room, overtook the count, who pusillanimously forsook his inamorata, and was making the best of his way towards the door, where Lord De Clifford saved him all further trouble by kicking him down stairs. On his return, after the performance of this little *cérémonie*, he found Mademoiselle d’Antoville upon her knees, in a fine sonnambula attitude, with her hair let down about her shoulders, according to the most approved fashion of all heroines, guilty or guiltless: but all was in vain; nothing could she extort from her inexorable companion, but a mandate to depart from under his roof in less than six hours. Never had Mademoiselle felt so intensely before, never did she feel so intensely again—no, not even when, a year after these events, she published a novel called “*Le Cœur Épuisé*,” and had a triumphal dinner given to her on the occasion, at Lointier’s, by six members of la jeune France, who alternately addressed her as Aspasia and Corinne.

Meanwhile Lord De Clifford returned to his brother's room, foaming with rage, in the exuberance of which he proclaimed (Saville, whom he would not trust, having retired to bed) his Laura's delinquency.

"Those d——d women!" said he; "do what you will for them, it's all the same—no gratitude, no honour, no faith in any of them. It was only the day before yesterday that I replenished her wardrobe with what might have constituted the *trousseau* of a princess—d——n her!"

"I fear, my dear fellow," soothed Herbert, in the melancholy retrospective tone of experience, "that women are like what the late king of Naples said of his troops—'dress them as you will, they'll run away all the same.'"

"Well, well, it can't be helped," said Major Nonplus, between the interstices of a sonorous yawn in alto; "you'll be better in a day or two; but you see, just at first, love is like cheese—it digests everything but itself."

"Very just observation," said the Dowager; "but," added she, taking her son's arm, and wishing Herbert good-night, "I want to say a few words to you on this here business."

As soon as Lord De Clifford had reached his mother's room, she said—

"You see, my dear, you must not mention this here circumstance of *momselle's* improper behaviour to Lady De Clifford—it's better not, because, as she never liked her, and has been wishing her gone, I can say to her, that in your anxiety to consult all her just and reasonable wishes, you made it a *pint* to send *momselle* away, and get an English governess in her place. Besides, it will look *vaustly* well to the world, as if you always let her have her way about the little *gurl's* education, and so stop any remarks when she is taken from her and put to school, which is what I wish you to do, my dear, as it will be *vaustly* cheaper, and prevent her mother having so much influence over her. But you see, my dear, all these here sort of things require caution and prudence on account of the ill-nature of the world; but, as I always tell you, *you* are a *vaust* deal too open and candid."

"And as I always say, my dear ma'am, you certainly are the cleverest woman and best manager in the world," rejoined the worthy son of this amiable parent, as he kissed her hand and wished her good night, or rather morning. But somehow or other, notwithstanding these wise precautions, by ten o'clock the next day, Lady De Clifford, in common with every other inmate of the hotel, was quite *au fait* to the scene between her husband and Count Campobello, and the true 'cause of Mademoiselle d'Antoville's departure. Still it was a relief to know that she was gone on any terms; and as for little Julia, she felt nothing but unmingled de-

light at finding that she should now wholly and solely be with her own dear mother and aunt.

Herbert Grimstone, being perfectly convalescent in three or four days after his accident, it was decided that they should return to England, via Marseilles, the following week. The Seymours and Monsieur de Rivoli were to accompany them as far as Paris, but Major Nonplus had threatened himself all the way to England.

The day before their departure, Lady De Clifford had been reading that very horrible but very clever book, Mr. Reynolds's "Parricide."

"The description of the parricide's father," said she to Fanny, laying down the book, "shows great knowledge of human nature—he says, 'he neither possessed any positive virtue nor vice'—and I know of but two words that accurately describe him—he was eminently selfish and insensible; in these two sentences all his atrocities are fully accounted for—the first being the alpha and omega of all vice, and the latter a barrier which no virtue ever passes; but still, I think, the moral of such powerful materials would have been much more subtile, consequently infinitely more useful, had he made both father and son equal monsters, equal destroyers of their own and others' happiness, and still kept them *within* the pale of the law; for then it would have been sufficiently *vraisemblable* to have borne a comparison with the dire hourly and daily realities of life, all arising out of the same sources, parental neglect, and selfishness, and vanity let loose, like so many vicious unbridled brutes, enacting the part of wild horses to that doomed Mazeppa, their possessor's fate.

"One thing this work convinces me of," continued Lady De Clifford, "namely, that the writer is a perfect Æneas of a son, though, no doubt, that discriminating multiplied individual, the world, will vote him a parricide, and his book an autobiography, actions being of no import whatever, thanks to the omnipotence of the press; therefore, in order to attain the reputation of great morality, people have only to write books filled with such claptraps as benevolence, virtue, morals, civil and religious liberty, etc., etc., etc., and thickly interlard it with the greatest happiness of the greatest numbers, which, being interpreted, means a total and most immoral disregard to the happiness and well-being of any and every individual. In short, to succeed in this enlightened age, when the march of intellect has billeted even every subaltern mind on that Marquis de Carabas of our social system, public opinion, to seem is everything, to be nothing; therefore let all that would propitiate this autocrat follow the example of Glaucus and forthwith exchange the golden arms of reality for Diomedes' brazen ones of assumption."

"All you say is too true," replied Fanny; and she sighed as she said it, for by the flush upon Julia's cheek, and the unusual bright-

ness of her eyes, she could not but see how deeply she had been drawing from and referring to her own individual misfortunes.

“Do not go on reading that book, dearest,” said she; “it would make you miserable, if you were not already so. Here is Mrs. Armytage, which, like every thing else of Mrs. Gore’s, is clever and delightful; but in this she really out-does herself, for I think the conception almost Shakspearian.”

Julia was about to reply, when the dowager entered, and with her usual vulpine smile began with, “My dear madam, I fear you will find the little *gurl* very troublesome just at present; but you see, as you did not approve of her, De Clifford made it a *pint* to part with Momselle on that account, and—and—”

“On account of her conduct with Count Campobello, I suppose,” interrupted Lady De Clifford, somewhat haughtily.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Waltz, the comet, whiskers, and the new government illuminated heaven and earth in all their glory much about the same time; of these, the comet only has disappeared; the other three continue to astonish us still!—*Note by Printer’s Devil to Lord Byron’s “WALTZ.”*

Most men are slaves because they cannot pronounce the monosyllable “No.”
—LORD CLARENDON.

Lord Bath passed for one of the wisest men in England. “When one is in opposition,” said he, “it is very easy indeed to know what to say; but when one is minister, it is difficult to know what *not* to say.”

DR. JOHNSON has observed, “that all the performances of the human heart, at which we look with praise or wonder, are instances of the resistless force of perseverance. It is by this that the quarry becomes a pyramid, and that distant countries are united with canals. If a man was to compare the effect of a single stroke of the pickaxe, or of one impression of the spade, with the general design and last result, he would be overwhelmed by the sense of their disproportion; yet these petty operations, incessantly continued, in time surmount the greatest difficulties, and mountains are levelled, and oceans bounded, by the slender force of human beings.”

Lord Melford was apparently of the same opinion; for, upon Cheveley’s arrival at the Clarendon, he found a note from the Premier, requesting him to call upon him at his house in —— street, at his earliest convenience.—“That would be never,” said Lord Cheveley, as he tossed the note aside; but this Lord Melford could not hear, and if he had, he would not have heeded it; for he was at the time in a dilemma, from which it was necessary to extricate himself and his colleagues *coûte qu’il coûte*, and in doing so, if he could at the same time make a powerful proselyte in the person of

Lord Cheveley, his position would be strengthened, and his triumph be complete. Lord Denham, whose head was to the full as long and somewhat deeper than the Premier's, and who was, moreover, the cynosure of the radical party, had, as we have before stated, immediately returned from the North, on the demise of the king, and calculating upon his influence with a royal and illustrious lady, thought, as far as office went, that he would only have to choose, and to accept; but, as two suns cannot shine in one hemisphere, neither can two paramount ambitions run amicably abreast in the same political race; consequently, while Lord Denham's great object was to remain at home and about court, it was equally Lord Melford's object to prevent his doing so. Something must be done; but what? ay, there was the rub;—but possessing as he did an abundance of prompt decision and courage, which in itself amounts to genius, and nine times out of ten makes to attempt and to succeed synonymous; and having in his political game first played the knave and then led the queen, a little more finessing was an easy and natural result by which he might hope to secure all the honours to himself. Lord Denham's wish had been to succeed Lord Protocol, as minister for foreign affairs; but Lord Protocol had no idea of being succeeded, nor in this instance was it Lord Melford's desire that he should; there were the colonies going begging; if he could but get Lord Cheveley to accept of the governor-generalship, it would be a great point gained, because this would be so publicly coalescing with the whigs; and Lord Denham, in the event of Lord Cheveley's being brought round, must be got back to St. Petersburg, Vienna, or even sent to Ireland, as a *pis aller*; but unfortunately, Lord Cheveley, for reasons best known to himself, delayed so long in his journey from Venice, that he did not reach England till the middle of December.

Rebellions, like time and tide, wait for no man, and republican patriots like Lord Denham are equally impatient of any delay that thwarts their ambition,—I beg pardon, their patriotic views. The colonial disturbances were daily increasing, and Lord Denham was hourly giving the Melford administration unequivocal and alarming proofs of how deeply he felt and how much he resented their want of good faith and hollow conduct towards him; in short, a crisis had arrived, and it was necessary to meet it, which Lord Melford did by going to Lord Denham, and saying it was her Majesty's personal wish, that he should accept the colonies, as there was no one else in whose zeal and abilities her Majesty, or her Majesty's ministers, could place sufficient confidence to trust with so important and arduous a mission.

“Thank God, this at last is settled,” thought Lord Melford, as he finished the complimentary peroration; he was therefore not a

little taken aback when Lord Denham drew himself up to his full height; his saturnine face growing still darker, his determined mouth becoming more rigid, and his penetrating flashing eyes piercing with a sort of microscopic power into those of Lord Melford, as he coldly replied,—

“Then, my Lord, if it’s her Majesty’s personal wish, it is worth asking as a personal favour.”

“Oh, yes, certainly, of course,” stammered Lord Melford; “only it was to save time that I intimated her Majesty’s wishes,” laying great emphasis on the last word; “but,” added he, looking at his watch, that grand resource of even prime ministers, when they are in a dilemma; “I am going down to Windsor now, may I convey to her Majesty your consent to her wishes?”

“I can give but one answer,” replied Lord Denham haughtily, as he placed his hand upon the bell, “as soon as her Majesty is graciously pleased to make known to me what are her wishes.”

“Spoken like yourself, my lord,” said Lord Melford, shaking his hand apparently with the warmest friendship, as he hurried from the room to regain his carriage. “To Windsor,” said he, flinging himself into the far corner of it. Crack went the whip, and on flew the horses, but they did not fly half as fast as Lord Melford’s thoughts. “D—n those Lucifer spirits,” muttered the *poco curante* Premier, pulling his under lip, “they give one more trouble than all the rest of the world put together. I wish the fellow was not so rich and independent; however, we are not troubled with many of the same genus, for most of our colleagues are such poor devils both in purse and spirit, that they will take anything—but offence.” Now the cause of his lordship’s present *embarras* arose not so much from Lord Denham’s restiveness, as from an anxiety touching the best method of making Her Majesty’s wishes known to herself, and, when known, of getting her to convey them to Lord Denham; but as no one knew better than the gallant Premier, that “faint heart never won a fair lady,” by the time he arrived at Windsor, he was as brave as a lion. Being immediately admitted to the presence, he lost no time in illustrating Hobbes’ definition of eloquence, viz. “the putting together of passionate words, and applying them to the passions and interests of the hearer;” and so well did he succeed that, in less than half an hour, he had convinced Her Majesty, that Lord Denham’s acceptance of the Colonies was not only one of her principal wishes, but that it was requisite to the salvation of that part of Her Majesty’s dominions; the next step was easy, and the youthful Sovereign consented in her “most sweet voice” to write an autograph letter to Lord Denham, begging his acceptance of the mission, and flatteringly wording the request as a personal favour. A courier being despatched, with this “consummation,” that Lord

Melford had so "devoutly wished," his lordship remained to dinner, for he was of the same opinion as Epictetus, that "a table without music, is little better than a manger; for music at meals is like a carbuncle set in gold, or the signet of an emerald highly burnished." And in these our degenerate days, where is music at meals to be had, except at the tables of Majesty? Alas! for the best organized human plans, they have still so much of the Hydra in them, that no sooner do we lop off one fitful head, than lo! another appears; and so it was in the present instance, for Lord Denham, not content with receiving Her Majesty's personal request, and being made acquainted with her wishes, which as he loyally and gallantly assured her, "to know was to obey," must needs in his turn demand a favour, that of being allowed to furnish the whole *frais* of the expedition, from his own privy purse. The depth and subtilty of the request, which left Lord Denham perfectly unfettered, as to any appointments he might in his turn make, was a source of much annoyance and embarrassment to Lord Melford at the time, but still more so at a subsequent period, when he found it expedient solemnly to deny all knowledge of the appointments of some most disreputable persons, whom Lord Denham had enrolled among his suite, at Lord Melford's especial solicitation. He nevertheless was "an honourable man; so are they all honourable men."

Now when Cheveley arrived in England, Lord Denham was in the thick of his preparations for his voyage across the Atlantic; and although some time before Lord Protocol had resolutely and angrily refused to move one inch towards making way for Lord Denham, yet so little did the innocent Premier (himself now "hushed and satiate" with good things,) remember the hungry cravings of human and political nature, that he actually indulged the dream of Lord Protocol's resigning, in a paroxysm of proselytism, for Lord Cheveley, though he had selfishly refused to do so for Lord Denham. Nor was this such a chimera after all, as Lord Melford only judged by himself, and therefore knew how much more the Whigs will do for their enemies, than their friends.

Thus stood matters when Lord Cheveley found Lord Melford's note. Awful as the moment is that severs us from the object we love, and insulates us as it were from all the living world, yet the temporary annihilation that accompanies it spares us for a while the acutest pangs of absence; it is not till time has widened and consolidated the dreadful chasm in our existence, that we awaken to a full conviction of all its horrors, for it is not till then that we feel the hollow hours lagging slowly on, as though they would keep pace with our own decrepitude of heart, through which nothing glides but the vain shadows of the past! It was not therefore until he had actually left Italy, that Lord Cheveley felt his utter

wretchedness and desolation : and London in December was not calculated to lessen it, as it only presents a pea-soup fog, which renders the necessary and natural process of respiration, almost what Dr. Johnson's idea of fine music ought to be, impossible ! The solemn stillness, never broken but every second hour, by the cry of "milk," or "muffins," and the roll of the solitary chariot wheels of some peculiarly lucky doctor ; while human beings are, like the refugees in the Simplon, "few and far between," and those consisting of a few penny-a-liners required to be on the spot all the year round, for puffs, politics, and Daffy's Elixir : these, with some dozen dingy-looking knaves of clubs, who cannot breathe any atmosphere but White's, Brooks's, or the Athenæum, and some half dozen of the tail, their hats at the back of their heads, their hands in their pockets, (where they have it all to themselves,) and their faces half hid in green worsted comfortables, looking very synonymous with their own favourite dinner, namely "a pig's face on a bolster of cabbage !" constitute London in December.

Anglo-gastronomes may not know this *plat*. I must in justice add that the name was invented by a *wag* of the tail. Having for the last few months enjoyed a happy absence of newspapers, which like other "d—d good-natured friends," are always sure to tell you something disagreeable, Lord Cheveley thought he might as well fortify himself with a little tincture of politics, before he called upon Lord Melford—accordingly he drove first to the Carlton ; enveloped as he was in a sable-lined great coat, the collar of which concealed every feature but his eyes, he could not but marvel at the quick recognition and overwhelming congratulations of persons whom he scarcely knew ! "Ah," thought he, "had my position been reversed, and I had lost a fortune and a title, instead of having gained one, how very short-sighted my nearest and dearest friends would have been ! I even doubt whether upon hearing my name they would have remembered me ; yet now these worthy people, whom I scarcely know, generously remember me ; nay more, have the tenderest interest in my welfare, the warmest sympathy with my new-blown honours ! O world ! world ! thou art lizard-eyed, and seest nothing that the sun does not shine upon." Finding it impossible to read the papers, from the greetings and congratulations of his numerous friends, Lord Cheveley thought it better to go at once, and get his visit to Lord Melford over, especially as it was his intention to go down to Cheveley place the next day, where he intended to spend the Christmas, for Cheveley Place was in the same county as Blichingly, and only five miles from it, and Julia had been there, and might be there again ; at all events there was a melancholy pleasure in being near where she had ever been ; added to this, his mother, whose memory he all but adored, was buried there ; and Hilton, his paternal estate, was in York-

shire, and he did not like the neighbourhood ; the fact was, he wished to go to Cheveley, and who that had the power ever yet lacked good reasons for doing what they liked. When Lord Cheveley reached —— street, it was about half-past three, but so dark, that the lamp in the hall was lit. The servant having given in his name before he got out of the carriage, the porter was duly prepared with his best bow ; but to Cheveley's inquiry of whether any one was with Lord Melford, and if he could see him then ? he remained silent ; and the footman hesitated, till the Groom of the Chambers solved all difficulties, by stepping forward from the inner hall, and saying, in a voice that might have brought over one half the opposition—

“If your lordship will have the goodness to walk up stairs, my lord will be ready to receive you immediately.”

So accordingly up he walked, and was shown into a room, not over large, where blazed a bright fire of Kendal coal ; on the table burned a pair of candles, in *or moulu* or gilt library candlesticks ; the groom of the chambers shook the cushions of a bergère, drew it to the fire, snuffed the candles, and withdrew. On the table were divers piles of printed foolscap packets, tied with red tape, such as bills passed, and to be passed, two or three volumes of parliamentary debates, “Smith's Wealth of Nations,” “Bentham on Popular Fallacies,” and a great curiosity, in the shape of a manuscript German-text copy of an unpublished work of Cicero's, “De Ordinandi Republica et de Inveniendis Orationum Exordiis,” the original of which was formerly in the possession of Cardinal Mazarine, and is at present, I believe, in the library at Vienna ; there was also a most official profusion of envelopes, and huge sticks of read sealing-wax : under the former Lord Cheveley detected two other books.

Upon drawing them forth, they proved to be the “Last Book of Beauty,” and one of Paul de Kock's novels, “Le Mari, l'Amant, et la Femme.” Cheveley could not help smiling, as he remembered the practical knowledge the Premier had had of all three characters, and how, under all the decencies and dignities of office, he had detected the nature of the man ; but he had scarcely replaced the books, sorry at having disturbed them, as they were evidently not intended for public view, when his attention was arrested by the loud opening of a door in the passage, and a voice exclaiming, rather above cabinet pitch, “Remember, I am either with you or against you, my lord :” this was followed by a forced cough from another person, and Lord Melford's voice calling loudly over the stairs for Lord Protocol's carriage. Lord Protocol was the utterer of the prophetic “remember,” and the whole speech was in answer to Lord Melford's last attempt to get him to resign in favour of Lord Cheveley ; however, no sooner had the sound of Lord

Protocol's chariot-wheels died away in Park-lane, in their homeward course, than the folding doors in the room where Lord Cheveley sat were opened by Lord Melford himself, who advanced with many smiles, and that two-handed cordiality which costs nothing, and often buys a great deal.

"I'm delighted to see you, my dear marquis, and hope I have the pleasure of being the first to call you so?" said he, as he conducted Lord Cheveley through an inner room to a third, and closed the door. Cheveley took the fauteuil next the fire, that Lord Melford pointed to, but the latter stood opposite to him, his elbow leaning on the mantel-piece. Standing is a much more diplomatic position than sitting, for if any thing occurs during conference to disconcert or embarrass, it is much easier to shift one's position, and tutor one's countenance.

"The courier found you at Venice, did he not?" recommenced Lord Melford.

"Yes," was the laconic reply. Here an awkward pause ensued, during which Lord Melford looked at the nails of his right hand. His lordship had been, what was called in the war, a remarkably handsome man, in those happy days when male attire was shapeless and voluminous as a balloon when the gas is out, and figure was of no account; indeed, his face was still handsome, and his eyes, though blue, had all the effect of being dark, and were not unlike the most beautiful eyes in the world, those of a Blenheim dog. The chief source of a long career of popularity had been a sort of triple bob-major laugh, in which he indulged on all occasions, even when he did not win; and having been a promising young man for forty years, it was not easy, when, at length, he began to perform the part of a great man, to disencumber himself of this undignified laugh, which then, like many other of his early friends, he would gladly have been rid of, and the effect of it was often ludicrous in the extreme, for sometimes in the midst of a merry peal, the recollection of his present dignity would cause him to check it suddenly, which had precisely the same ridiculous effect as the sudden stop of the sudden laugh of the magician's trunkless head in "Zee, zi, zo, zoo," or the "Bronze Horse," as converted into an Easter piece; and the instantaneous rigidity of the Premier's muscles, when he reined himself in, nearly threw every one else into convulsions. Montaigne says that "fear sometimes adds wings to the heels, and sometimes nails them to the ground, and fetters them from moving," and so it was with the tongue in the present instance: the fear of defeating his object, by being too precipitate, kept Lord Melford silent for a few seconds, and then made him resort to indifferent questions, to avoid coming too directly to the point.

"The De Cliffords were at Venice, were they not?" asked he.

"Ye—s; it was with them I was staying."

“She’s a handsome person, don’t you think so?”

“Ve—very,” and Cheveley got a most troublesome fit of coughing.

“He’s clever in a way; writes good political articles,” persisted Lord Melford.

“I can’t fancy his doing anything well; but then I dislike him so very much, that I am not an impartial judge.”

“He’s a disagreeable man certainly, such a pompous, stilted manner.”

“I think him an egregious fool besides.”

“I believe he is somewhat of a fribble,” conceded his ally, the Premier; “dabbles in carving and gilding, and fusses about tables and chairs.”

“I don’t call a man a fribble,” said Cheveley, “for being fond of beautiful furniture, more than for having a taste for pictures and statues; Cicero, we all know, was neither foppish nor luxurious in his habits or expenditure, and yet he gave 10,000 sesterces for a citron-wood table, and half that sum for a small maple cabinet, more, I grant, than any cabinet could be worth even in *his* days.”

“Ha! ha! ha!” zee, zi, zo, zoo’d the premier; but suddenly remembering not only his dignity, but that here was an opening, he drew up, and became “every inch” a Prime Minister, as he replied, in a complimentary tone, “Why, provided that it was a Cabinet that your lordship formed part of, I don’t think you would find many to coincide in that opinion.”

“Then,” said Cheveley, bowing to the hollow compliment, “I fear they must know even less than I do of the trade of cabinet-making; for I have always understood, that materials that have long been used in other forms, if only hastily and slightly veneered, on the expediency of the moment, will never dove-tail well into any new work.”

“Well, but metaphor apart,” replied Lord Melford, protruding his head, and looking Cheveley for the first time full in the face, “you surely are by far too enlightened to suppose that this country can ever again be governed upon Tory principles; the times are changing, and not with the locomotive slowness of the pillions, and jennets, and lumbering coaches of our ancestors, but with the rapidity and diffusion of steam and rail-roads; and we must change with them—ay, and through the medium of the vehicles they provide, and not rummage the Tower for Henry the Eighth’s saddle, or Queen Elizabeth’s gilt car.”

“I agree that the times are not changing, but changed; and that to a certain degree it is necessary to change, or rather to progress with them; for that the same legislative code that was comparatively perfect in the days of our forefathers would,

without occasional alterations and remodelling, be as obsolete and inconvenient to us their descendants as their flowing wigs and trunk hose would be to our modern notions of the convenient in dress, no one will attempt to deny; but what I object to is, that in altering the fashion, we go well nigh to destroying the material, and stripping to that degree of bareness that must endanger our constitution."

"Why," replied Lord Melford, "for that matter, nothing human can be perfect; and perhaps, '*Nullum fit magnum ingenium sine mixtura dementiæ*;' and the ablest measures will always have some great handle, of which the many can take hold. Yet it's quite impossible that the wisdom of one age can be the wisdom of all ages. Were Lord Bacon living now, his genius would be the same, but his manner of evincing it would be very different; and Cardinal Wolsey's diplomacy, though equally subtle and energetic, would perforce have been poised on a different basis."

"Quite true," said Cheveley; "but I deny that in any age Lord Bacon would from expediency have become a Lord Bolingbroke, or a Lord Brougham, any more than Andrew Marvel would ever have turned, through the pressure of the times, into a John Wilkes, or a William Cobbett."

"I am not quite sure of that," zee, zi, zo, zoo'd the premier: "circumstances make involuntary changes in us all."

"You think, then," said Cheveley, smiling, and with rather more point than was quite consistent with his usual good breeding—"that, did Licinius Mutianus flourish now, he might perhaps prefer dining every day at court to entertaining his friends in a hollow tree?" (1)

The best of all possible ways to parry a conversational thrust is not to appear to feel it, much less to wince under it; so Lord Melford suddenly recollected that it was very *infra dig.* for a Prime Minister to have time for metaphysical discussions; and abruptly exclaimed—

"However, as my time is full from half-past four till eight, I had better come to the point at once with you, my lord; frankly then, can I induce you to become an ornament to, and a supporter of, my administration?" And as he put this question in a quick but energetic voice, Lord Melford fixed his eyes on him, as though he could look him into acquiescence.

"Then I answer as frankly, my lord," replied Cheveley, rising, and putting on his gloves,—“you *can not*: there are three reasons against it, which might be reduced to one—that of my political tenets

(1) See Pliny's account of the immense hollow plane-tree in Lycia, wherein the Consul Licinius Mutianus used, with his eighteen friends, to dine and sup, and even to sleep, in preference to his own marble chamber and richly-wrought bed of beaten gold, with canopies of rare embroidery.

differing totally from your lordship's; next, my talents (if I have any) do n't lie in politics, because I have never been spurred to to them by inclination; and thirdly, though Napoleon declared that every man has his price, if you can but find it out, I have none, because *I want nothing.*"

The last was the only reason that Lord Melford could fully comprehend, and thought cogent; the two first were, in his opinion, "frivolous and vexatious," for he had been accustomed to convert Tories into Whigs by the magic wand of office, and to stock the state with persons who had not the slightest political genius:—in short, he was as good a metamorphoser of bipeds as the Yorkshire ostler was of quadrupeds; who, when a traveller asked him what breed a strange-looking animal of the canine species was of, that was squatted before the door of the inn, replied—"Whoy, sur, when measter got him he wur a greyhound, and we called him Floy (Fly); then we fattened him up a bit, and he wur a foxhound, and we called un Trap; but now we've cut the ears and tail on him, and made a mastiff on him, we calls him Lion!" There was nothing, therefore, further for Lord Melford to do but to bow coldly, express his regrets, and change the subject as quickly as possible; which he did by observing, as Cheveley was taking possession of his hat and cane, as a preliminary to his departure,—

"You've heard of poor Neville's accident, I suppose?"

"No," replied Cheveley; "what Neville?"

"Lady De Clifford's father: he dislocated his ankle the other day at Melton, and is now in town under Ashley Cooper; you know that he is going to sell his house in Berkeley Square, and live entirely in Yorkshire?" added Lord Melford, raising his voice, as they had now reached the door that opened into the passage.

"I do n't know him personally," said Lord Cheveley; "but am sorry for his accident."

And here the two peers separated, shaking hands three pressures less cordially than when they had met; Cheveley to return to his own thoughts at the Clarendon, and Lord Melford back to his library chair, to extract all the consolation possible out of the reflexion that, as Lord Protocol would not resign, and there was no other office actually vacant at the time, it was perhaps less embarrassing to him, on the whole, that Lord Cheveley did not accede to his overtures: had he been some poor devil who had been speaking himself into a consumption, writing his fingers to the bone in pamphlets and leading articles, or wasting his patrimony at elections in support of the Whig interest generally, and the Melford administration particularly, he might have been put off, and kept on, with promises and prevarications; but a nobleman of princely fortune could not be treated in the same way: it would be neces-

sary to pile his coffers still higher with the solid realities of *political gratitude*! “After all, perhaps it is better as it is for the present, and there is no knowing what time may bring about; he is young—love often does wonders, and makes as many politicians as it mars,” said the Premier, thinking of his own pretty niece, as he dipped his pen into the ink, and wrote the following paragraph for all the ministerial papers of the next day:—

“We have good reasons for knowing that the report current last week in several political circles, of the Premier having made overtures to the young Marquis of Cheveley, to join the Melford administration, is totally without foundation. The fact of the noble Viscount having been a great friend of the late Marquis’s since the days of Fox,—and being also a personal friend of his nephew’s, the present Marquis,—may perhaps have given rise to this report; especially as we believe we are correct in stating that Lord Melford is the only person the young Marquis has yet called upon since his return from the continent.”

Now there had been no report whatever about Lord Melford’s overtures to Lord Cheveley; but no doubt there would be, and so it was as well to be a little Irish, and contradict it before-hand. And what is the use of being the proprietor of that Hercules of Policinellos, the Press, if one cannot pull the strings of the puppets when and how one pleases?

CHAPTER XXIV.

Lords of the quill, whose critical assaults
O’erthrow whole quartos, with their quires of faults;
Who soon detect, and mark where’er we fail,
And prove our marble with too nice a nail!
Democritus himself was not so bad;
He only thought, but you would make us mad!

LORD BYRON’S *Hints from Horace.*

A modern critic is a thing who runs
All ways, all risks, to evitate his duns;
Let but the D—I ask him home to dine,
And lend him money, while he gave him wine,
Howe’er obscene the trash Old Nick might write,
Its praise his grateful guest would still indite:—
Swear it was moral, beautiful, refined!
And that each page evinced *a spotless mind!*

Yet think of this, when many a tongue,
Whose busy accents whisper blame,
Would do the heart *thou lovest* wrong,

And brand a *still un-blighted* name.—LORD BYRON.

I ACKNOWLEDGE my obtuseness, and confess that I have never been able clearly to define the chronological point alluded to in that often-quoted line—

“Ere England’s griefs began.”

Had it not been written so long before their advent, I should, from my own personal experience, feel quite convinced that it was a national reflection upon those banes of domestic happiness, clubs and cabriolets, pipes and politics, rail-roads and reform-bills;—but, no, as I said before, the stanza was penned prior to these cluster-plagues; and till they appeared, what could England's griefs have been? To be sure, I'm not very well versed in English history, but still I think, as men went—and still more, as men go—that Harry the Eighth was a good sort of man enough (whatever queens may think to the contrary), for he did not establish the decapitation and repudiating of wives into a general custom; but, with a proper sense of his kingly dignity, reserved this luxury as a royal privilege.

Ah! poor man! how he would stare, could he look out of his grave and see the pitch luxury has got to now, even among the Commons of England! But I must leave this interesting subject, and return to Lord Cheveley; so “one at a time, if you please,” as poor, dear Henry the Eighth said to his wives. There is nothing which tends more to aggravate a feeling of desolation than a large room untenanted save by ourselves; and the paraphernalia of a fine dinner, which we have neither appetite nor companionship to help us through. Lord Cheveley felt this, as he mechanically sipped his claret, after his solitary meal at the Clarendon. He rose and took two or three turns up and down the room; he remembered (and it was not the only part of their conversation that at the time he *did* remember) that Lord Melford had said the Nevilles were in town; and then followed innumerable lamentations upon his ill-luck in not knowing them. “It would be some consolation to know *her* father and mother; but no, it is better not—did I not promise that I would never, directly or indirectly, come in her way? Ay, the promise was easy to make; but, oh! how hard to keep! And Saville, what is he about? surely, surely he might have written one line;—but there it is:—

‘ Who ne’er have loved, and loved in vain,
Can neither feel nor pity pain.’

He is too happy in his happy love to think of his poor friend; or perhap he suspects how it is with me, and plays the prudent—people are so coldly calculating for others.” Cheveley sat down; his elbows rested on the table—his face was buried in his hands—the recollections of the last few months of his life crowded, as it were, to a focus in his heart, and he sobbed like a child. Memory is the conscience of love; and from the moment we leave what we have loved (either from principle or the want of it), its murmurs leave us no peace. Again Cheveley paced the room, and with that restlessness of spirit which ever makes the unhappy think that they

will be better anywhere than where they are, he rang the bell, and ordered the carriage.

“Will your lordship take coffee before you go out?” inquired Sandford, when he had received the order.

“No, I’m going to the Athenæum:—I’ll get some there. Let the carriage come round directly.”

What hot-beds of masculine selfishness those said clubs are! No wonder the homes for which it is neither convenient nor agreeable to provide the bare necessities of life should be deserted for luxuries to be had at a cheaper rate; and even to those whose ample means secure the same style of living at home: yet, to nine Englishmen out of ten, who detest ladies’ society, and never desire to see a woman’s face, unless it be those belonging to ladies of a certain description, the luxury of hats and dirty boots is irresistible, to say nothing of “the Club” and “the House of Commons” being always unquestionable places to note in the conjugal log-book. It would save a great deal of trouble to inquiring foreigners, if, for the future, lexicographers would insert opposite the word “home”—a place for keeping wives and children; “mutton chops”—food for ditto.

Were dictionaries thus explicit, tourists taking inventories of foreign countries might avoid even the little trifling errors made by a recent German traveller in his book, where he states that the “English physicians always wear black, and sometimes swords; that all the Opposition eat boiled beef, and that a Tory dinner-table is distinguished by little rolls, while the Whigs show their vulgarity by uncouth hunches of bread!”

When Cheveley reached the Athenæum, a group of four were standing before one of the fire-places. He took possession of a table at one side of the chimney-piece; and while he is busy turning over the newspapers and magazines, you and I, dear reader, for want of something better to do, will take a look at the *partie carrée*. One was a good-natured-looking elderly gentleman, a Mr. Spoonbill: his physiognomy was that of a snipe, whose bill had been ground down: his *chevelure* was thin and grizzled, but the few remaining hairs he had were rampant, and formed an inverted V over his forehead; in short, he was one of those good creatures you often read of, but seldom see, who remained constant to wide-frilled shirts, ribbed silk stockings, watch-fobs and large seals, and who was always able—and what was infinitely more extraordinary, *willing*—to lend a friend four or five hundred pounds. His *métier* was that of *raconteur* and diner-out; and for the last half century, not a debate of any importance had taken place without his having been present. He was a Whig of the old school; and now he sat in an equestrian attitude upon a chair, the ends of his snuff-coloured coat touching the ground; the back of the chair

supporting his elbows, and his interlaced fingers supporting his chin, as his upward gaze was directed to a tall lanky individual, with whom he was talking politics—for what else can Englishmen talk about?

The person he was at the moment listening to, and who was standing with his back to the fire, and his hands behind his back, was evidently the oracle of the party :—he was a Mr. York Fonnoir, the Radical editor of a Sunday newspaper, called “the Investigator.” His personal appearance was anything but prepossessing, being in features like a Calmuc Tartar, and in complexion like a badly embalmed mummy. Nevertheless he was unmistakably gentlemanlike, and about the most agreeable man in England; brilliantly witty, and, what is rarer still, deeply humorous : add to which, he was unquestionably the best living English political writer, for his English was genuine, and his style terse and forcible in the extreme, having at once the solidity and the brilliancy of the diamond ;—but, alas! like many other truly enlightened men, his morality was as lax as his opinions were liberal. And yet, among the shining lights which he so lauded and admired, there were many worse than him ; for he had neither turned his wife and children out of their home, to make way for a mistress ; nor then torn his children from their mother, in order to swamp a lesser injury in a greater ; for, like

“ Werter, to decent vice though much inclined,”

he had sufficient sense to think the world large enough for every one. Although professing the most ultra independence of principle, both in literary and political matters, it was ludicrous in the extreme, and somewhat disgusting, to see the utter trash in literature, and the disgraceful tergiversation in politics, that was lauded to the skies, or defended beyond them, in the “ Investigator,” provided the perpetrator, whether through feeding, flattery, or financial arrangements, were but of his clique. However, great integrity and straightforwardness of purpose can scarcely be expected from any man whose morals are derived from materialism, and whose ideas of purity of sentiment emanate from the life and writings of Jean Jacques, or from those who imitate him in both ; while to read Paul de Kock, or

“ Laugh in Rabelais’ easy chair,”

forms his *ne plus ultra* of enjoyment. Yet, consistency, what is it? I have not a dictionary at hand, therefore I do n’t exactly know ; and in these days, when “money in both pockets” is the only tune *littérateurs* or politicians care for, it is difficult for them to know *sur quel pied danser*.

Opposite Mr. York Fonnoir stood a jackall of his, and many others beside, in the person of Mr. Fuzboz ; he was neither tall nor short, but remarkably plebeian-looking, which was the only thing

candid about him : he wore white Russia ducks in December, and was not a little proud of being a very ugly and noseless likeness of a "great tragedian," whom he tried to imitate in all things, even to his hand-writing. Mr. Fuzboz was a sort of lick-dust to Mr. Fonnoir, and to Mr. Anybody, and everybody else of any celebrity to whom he could get access ; he it was who did the theatricals and other plasterings in "the Investigator ;" and, above all, he it was who invented biographies of "Eminent Living Authors," for magazines and other works, suppressing the full-fledged progeny of elderly gentlewomen, and pioneering-away wives, and other superfluous relations, of literary gentlemen, agreeably fettered by less ponderous ties ; in short, he was a most useful creature, good Mr. Fuzboz, being Bozzy to all the Dr. Johnsons, and Howell to all the Ben Jonsons of the day, to say nothing of his always having a stock of "Brummagem" enthusiasm on hand, and being a perfect Boreas at a puff.

Next to him, "though last, not least," stood Mr. Frederick Feedwell, who might not be worth mentioning, but that he had the honour of being a particular friend of Lord De Clifford's and Mr. Herbert Grimstone's : they constituted his only friends, and almost his only acquaintance, for his character was bad, even among the bad. About Mr. Frederick Feedwell there was nothing natural but his birth, his selfishness, and his stutter ; nature had never intended him for a hero of any sort, for there was something *tant soit peu ridicule* in his whole appearance that militated against it. His features consisted of an immense pair of over-fed-looking blue saucer eyes ; his cheeks, since his last trip to Paris, were equally like those mysterious-looking pink saucers, with a dash of yellow over them, that are sometimes seen, amid cap-blocks, blonde, ribbon, and tulle, tossing about a lady's-maid's room, but for what purpose they only know : his nose was very thick, and of the aspiring order, for it would turn up, in spite of his unwearying and constant efforts to pull or coax it downwards, and good things used his mouth as the print of the animals' feet did the entrance of the lion's den in the fable,—they all went in, but none came out. He was by nature thin, but from his Apician tastes he was getting an incipient paunch, which by pushing up his waistcoats, always gave them the appearance of being too short : he wished to be thought about thirty, but was, in reality, about eight-and-forty, and even under cover of an Hyperian chestnut wig, did not look an hour less than six-and-forty.

Mr. Frederick Feedwell's fortunes were as precarious and undefined as his birth : he had originally been intended for a diplomate, but whether he proved too diplomatic at the gaming-table or not, he failed, and then tried the bar, doubtless preferring that to being tried at it. The way in which he contrived to

eat his terms was, by taking chambers in Lincoln's Inn, keeping a French artiste, and trying how many meals a-day he could possibly manage, first by a course of late, and then by a course of early rising. Next to himself, he loved his dinner better than anything in this world ; and next to his dinner he loved his cook, as the cause of that sublime effect. This love it was that brought about one epoch in his life, in the shape of his first duel. In the chambers beneath him vegetated a briefless eater of beef-steaks, and digester of Blackstone : now it so happened that, all unworthy as he was of such an honour, he shared the same kitchen with Mr. Frederick Feedwell ; and one luckless day he dared to be hungry at five o'clock, when his laundress repaired to the kitchen to get ready a broil for him, little knowing the one that awaited her.

Monsieur Horsdœuvre, Mr. Frederick Feedwell's *chef*, was in the act of marinading a hare, and the idea of having the fire spoilt by such an "infernal machine" as a gridiron was more than either his patience as a man, or his genius as a cook, could bear ; so accordingly, after remonstrating in vain with the beef-steak beldam, he flew up stairs, spit in his hand, to his sympathising master, and, with the air of a Sylla, or rather of Talma in "Sylla," indignantly appealed to him whether he was to be insulted in his own kitchen ? and whether the *entremets* of Monsieur were to be endangered for the dinner of a *Monsieur Jaqueson* (Jackson), "*animal qui sait manger, mais qui ne sait pas goûter !*" concluded Monsieur Horsdœuvre, raising his voice, and thumping his heart with his right hand, conscious, in one sublime sentence, of having uttered the most degrading aspersion with which one human being could stigmatise another.

"Certainly not, my good Horsdœuvre," said the great Frederick ; "you may retire ; I will myself avenge your injuries, for they are mine."

The great *chef* doffed his cotton night-cap, clasped his hands, and withdrew, showering down three courses of thanks upon his generous and benevolent master, who immediately sat down and penned a challenge to the unfortunate Mr. Jackson, who, with a slippered foot on each hob, was anticipating hot beef-steaks, and not dreaming of cold lead. At first Mr. Jackson thought Mr. Frederick Feedwell must have lost his appetite, and next his wits, in consequence of it : then he thought the whole thing must have originated in some strange mistake ; so accordingly he tried to remonstrate with him upon the more than absurdity of fighting a duel about a kitchen fire ! but the more Mr. Jackson tried to explain and apologise, the more injured and insulted Mr. Frederick Feedwell felt, and the more indignant he grew ; so the duel he insisted upon, and the duel he had : pistols and seconds were procured, and Wormwood Scrubbs, and six in the morning, fixed

upon for the next day but one; Herbert Grimstone was to be Mr. Feedwell's second. Here I must record a touching little trait of considerate amiability in Frederick's character: a *ci-devant* diplomatic acquaintance had sent him a case of *âmes damnées* (1) from the Bosphorus; and Monsieur Horsdœuvre, next to his skill in dressing sturgeon, was celebrated for his *salmis* of *âme damnée*, which, with hock and shalot, *et le moindre soupçon de cavier*, he contrived to render almost a facsimile of woodcocks. The Dowager Lady Dangledog, Frederick's aunt, had that morning sent a quantity of game and venison, so that altogether his larder was well stocked; and the very morning of the duel Horsdœuvre had received orders for a splendid banquet "in the chamber of Apollo." Yet, with fire-arms around him, and death staring him in the face, he neither forgot his friends nor their dinner; but, with the *sang-froid* of a truly great man, sat down and wrote the following circular to the only three men in London whom at that time he knew, namely, Lord De Clifford, Herbert Grimstone, and a low attorney of the name of Loadall:

"My dear fellow, should I fall, pray come and dine at my chambers to-day at seven, as Horsdœuvre will be hurt if there is no one to eat his dinner; and while you are discussing his incomparable *âmes damnées*, think of your faithful friend,

"FRED. FEEDWELL."

But the one who could best appreciate the *âmes damnées*, the fates decreed should be there to do so, for Mr. Frederick Feedwell returned uninjured from the field of glory, as poor Mr. Jackson seemed fated to miss fire on all occasions; and the seconds succeeded so well in reconciling the hostile parties, that Mr. Frederick Feedwell, upon regaining his drawing-room in Lincoln's Inn, turned round facetiously to Mr. Herbert Grimstone, and said,—

"My de-de-de-dear fellow, as I could not kill him in a de-de-de-duel, I'll kill him with a dinner; for common people always die of a good dinner, — that is, of not ne-ne-ne-knowing what they eat."

And accordingly Mr. Jackson was asked to dinner, and became the butt of Mr. Frederick Feedwell and his friends. The next two years of his life Mr. Feedwell devoted to metaphysics; and at the end of it ascertained beyond a doubt, that all women like white sauces better than brown,—and what were the discoveries of Locke, Newton, or Galileo, to this? At the conclusion of this period, Mr. Herbert Grimstone went *chargé-d'affaires* to a German court, and took Mr. Frederick Feedwell with him as a sort of double, and by stuffing him into one of his own king's-button coats, made him useful in returning visits, and personating him where he was not known. Here Frederick became a great man, passing himself

(1) Particular kind of seagulls so called.

off as one of the legitimate Feedwells, whose name is a *passe-partout*, and doing all the mischief he possibly could, setting wife against husband, husband against wife, parent against child, and child against parent, in every house to which he had the *entrée*.

It at length became known to him that his absence would oblige ; and he returned to England, fortunately for himself, just on the first flush of the pauper parliaments, when he became member for Colchester, for six weeks, and evinced his zeal for the local interests of the Borough he had the honour to represent, by devouring incredible quantities of the "Natives !" The best way of attaining a popular carriage, he thought, was to be constantly seen upon the top of the mail, between London and Colchester, where he hit upon a plan for advertizing his senatorial honours, that Mr. Rowland, of Macassar oil celebrity, might have envied ; which was, whenever the coach stopped to change horses, crying out, "Any one here want a frank ? I shall be m-m m-most happy to give them one." In his maiden speech he immortalized himself by combining a disparity of purpose and opinion perfectly unheard of in parliamentary annals ; the debate was on the third reading of the Reform Bill, which was then at the crisis of its struggle. Mr. Frederick Feedwell rose, and looking round the house with the air of a Hampden, addressed the speaker as follows :—

"Sir, I differ *in toto* from the honourable member for ———, who has just sat down ; I also totally disapprove of every single clause in this Bill from first to last ; but, nevertheless, I shall make it a point to v-v-v-vote for it :"—in vain the Speaker cried "Order, order," the house was convulsed with laughter, and Mr. Frederick Feedwell rushed out of it, declaring that a man's best friends were always jealous of him the moment he did anything better or greater than themselves ! It was impossible to know Mr. Frederick Feedwell, and not be reminded of Monsieur Fumlo's epigram every time one looked at him.

"Qu'il est heureux, ce cher Monsieur Dorval,
Il s'aime, et n'a point de rival !"

In point of agreeability, his whole stock-in-trade consisted of two anecdotes ; the one *à propos*, or sometimes *à propos de bottes*, to religion, Sunday-schools, or a mother hearing her child its catechism, which was as follows, and always prefaced with "Oh, yes, there is nothing like r-r-r-religion ; you know the clergyman who was q-q-q-questioning a young girl from the catechism of Heidelberg, and put the first question, 'What is your only consolation in life and in death ?' the girl r-r-refused for some time to answer ; but when the priest insisted, she said, 'Well, then, since you m-m-m-must know, it is the young shoe-maker in Agneau Street !'" and, to add zest to these charming little *morceaux*, he had a trick of jerking the two fore-fingers of his right hand above his head,

at the conclusion of each of them. The other he always brought out at dinner, *à propos* to any one's aspersing the cook's reputation, by adding pepper or salt to what they were eating; the proem to this was invariably "I have no snuff, my dear fellow," with a shrug of the shoulders, to which the natural reply was, with a look of surprise, "Snuff! I did not ask for snuff." "N-n-n-no, my dear fellow; but I never can see any one deluge a thing with pepper, without thinking of the story of Kant's friend asking him to dinner one day at the table d'hôte at Königsberg, when a dish of vegetables being placed before a man who sat opposite to Kant, he immediately emptied the whole contents of the pepper-box into it, saying, 'I am exceedingly fond of this dish well peppered.' 'And I,' said Kant, spilling the whole contents of his snuff-box again over the pepper, 'am exceedingly fond of it with plenty of snuff!'"

Such were the group assembled, when Cheveley entered. Mr. Fonnoir was holding forth upon Lord Denham's present position and future prospects; Mr. Spoonbill was listening most attentively to all he uttered thereupon; Fuzboz was exclaiming, "How very true that is," to every "if" or "but" that fell from Mr. Fonnoir; and Mr. Frederick Feedwell was coaxing down his nose with his left hand, while with his right he unbuttoned the two first buttons of his waistcoat. From Lord Denham they got to Lord De Clifford.

"I wonder," said Mr. Fonnoir, "that the ministry does not do something for De Clifford."

"Yes, he's been of great use to them, I believe," replied Mr. Spoonbill.

"He's amazingly clever," interposed Fuzboz.

"A shocking brute to his wife, though, is he not?" inquired Mr. Spoonbill.

"Oh, who cares for that!" pshawed Fuzboz, contemptuously: here Lord Cheveley raised his eyes, and if looks could consume, the enlightened Fuzboz would have been reduced to ashes.

"To my own knowledge, I've seen her very provoking to him," said Mr. Fonnoir.

Cheveley actually writhed; and nothing but the conviction of the injury it would do Lady De Clifford, kept him from reducing Mr. Fonnoir's perpendicular to a horizontal position on the spot.

"Ah, but you do n't know what previous provocation he may have given her," premised the good-natured Spoonbill.

Cheveley came to a secret resolution of making his acquaintance the first opportunity.

"But what business have women to be provoked?" fluted Mr. Fonnoir, with his short, husky, satyr laugh.

Mr. Frederick Feedwell, who had been hitherto silent, for fear of impeding the progress of his digestion, now observed, as he turned his large blue saucer eyes full upon the mirror,—

"I think he is very j-j-j-jealous of her."

"Well, I should say, there never was a man less so," said Fonnoir.

"Decidedly," echoed Fuzboz.

"Ah," said Mr. Frederick Feedwell, with a shrug and a jerk of the two fore-fingers of his right hand in alto, "I dare say, y-y-y-you have no reason to think him so; b-b-b-but I judge from what I saw when I was staying in the house."

"Well," said Spoonbill, "I must say I never heard a breath against Lady De Clifford; so he surely can have no cause for his jealousy."

"Women," replied Mr. Frederick Feedwell, casting another look of proud devotion at the glass, "have sometimes great temptation thrown in their way, and then every allowance must be m-m-m-made for them."

"Why, hang it, Feedwell," laughed Mr. Spoonbill, contemptuously; "come, come, don't try to make us believe that their temptations, like those of St. Anthony, sometimes consist of prodigious bores (boars); it won't do, my good fellow, it won't do, the *prima facie* evidence is against you."

It was a fortunate circumstance for Mr. Frederick Feedwell's personal comfort, that the words "Viscountess De Clifford" caught Cheveley's eye, in a paragraph in the *Morning Post*, at the time of his passionate speech with regard to the temptations women are sometimes exposed to, or a *coup de pied* might have given the *coup de grace* to his assertion; the paragraph was as follows.

"Viscountess De Clifford. We regret to state that this aimable and distinguished lady now lies dangerously ill at Venice."

Cheveley read no more, the letters swam before him, the room whirled round with him, and had Mr. Frederick Feedwell roundly declared that all Lady De Clifford's unhappiness arose from a hopeless attachment to his own matchless self, he would not have heard him as he left the room and rushed down stairs; for swift as lightning he had taken the resolution of going to Mr. Neville's house, and ascertaining the truth of the paragraph he had just read. In his way into the street, he nearly jammed to death an unfortunate half-evaporated-looking man, who was coming to the Athenæum for "change of dulness," to finish an article for the Westminster Review, as he let the spring doors swing out of his hand and close upon the new arrival; and upon gaining the street he was walking hastily on, when his servant followed him with an "I beg your pardon, my lord, but the carriage is here."

"Eh, what, yes, but I don't want it, I'll walk home," stammered Cheveley.

"If you please, my lord, it is snowing hard," remonstrated the footman.

However, whether Cheveley pleased it or not, the snow, impelled by a north-east wind, came drifting fast in his face, but as he persisted in his intention of walking home, the knight of the shoulder-knot was obliged to retire, and philosophically getting into the carriage himself, shut up the steps as he best could, and having, prior to drawing up the window, called out "home" in his usual sonorous voice, he threw himself back in the carriage, and came to the conclusion that any man walking on such a night who had a carriage at his disposal, must be mad; and thought what a much better Marquis he would have made than his master. Intensely cold as the night was, Cheveley was in a perfect fever by the time he reached Berkeley-square, as he had walked there from Pall Mall in less than ten minutes, and it was not until he had turned into the square from Bruton-street, that he stopped and remembered that he neither knew the number, nor on which side of the square Mr. Neville's house was; as Gunter's door was still open, and a light gleamed from the shutters, he was on the point of turning in there to ask, when the fear of being recognized deterred him. While he was deliberating as to how he should gain this necessary piece of information, a policeman passed, and his doubts were at once solved.

"Can you tell me," said Cheveley, "what number Mr. Neville lives at in this square."

"Mr. Neville's house, sir," said the man civilly, and pointing to it with his stick as he spoke, "is No. —, on the opposite side of the square, nearly the centre house."

Cheveley thanked him, and hurried on; upon arriving at the door, his heart beat so violently, that he had not courage to knock, and as he leant for a moment against the railing, an apothecary's boy, with a covered basket, came up, and selecting a packet from it, gave a sharp ring at the bell; the door was opened, the medicine given in, and the servant about to shut it again, when Cheveley advanced,—

"Pray," said he, making a strong effort to speak calmly, and without embarrassment, "can you tell me where Lady De Clifford is now? for I want to forward a parcel to her?" Luckily for Cheveley there was no light in the outer hall, and that from the inner was not sufficiently brilliant to discover his pale and agitated face.

"She is somewhere abroad, I know, sir," replied the footman, "but where, I cannot exactly say, for I have not been very long here; but I will call the butler, and he will be able to give you every particular;" and the man went to do so; but returning from the inner door, added, "I beg your pardon, sir, won't you walk into the dining-room, it is so cold standing here?" Cheveley at first declined, upon the plea of disturbing the family, but

upon the footman's hospitably negating the supposition, by an assurance that there was no nobody there, as "Master was ill in bed, and Missus was reading to him;" the temptation of entering the house in which Julia had played as a child, was too great to resist, and he followed the servant in silence into the dining-room, where the man placed a chair, stirred up the fire, lighted candles, and left him, while he went in quest of the butler.

The room being hung with pictures, it was not to be supposed Cheveley would remain there without looking at them, for he felt there was one of Julia's among them; so he took one of the candles, and began to explore. The first that met his view was one of Lawrence's early beauties, disfigured in a white muslin window curtain, three inches of waist, shift sleeves looped up with a cord, the remainder of the white curtain rolled round the head, hair coming through, or rather tumbling out at the top, yellow pointed slippers, and a parasol (turned back, like those which have now come into fashion again,) lying on the grass. Such were the details of a picture, which nevertheless had one of those angel faces, which only Lawrence could perpetuate, and which from its strong likeness to Fanny Neville, Cheveley concluded to be her mother; except Lady De Clifford's, he had never seen such exquisitely beautiful hands and arms, those unmistakable quarterings of nature's heraldry; and who but Lawrence ever succeeded in infusing into canvas that pure patrician blood, that seems to flow like milk of roses through the delicately pencilled veins. He passed on, and soon came to another portrait by the same artist;—but oh, how different! It was a portrait of Julia and Fanny, about the ages of twelve and sixteen, and one of Lawrence's latest and happiest efforts; the composition of the picture, like that of all his later ones, was charming. Fanny was sitting beneath a large tree on a green knoll, with a quantity of wild flowers and reeds beside her. Julia was half lying at her feet, her elbow resting on her sister's knee, and her head thrown back as it rested on one hand; in the other was a book, in which she was evidently absorbed, while in her lap slept a beautiful but lazy little Blenheim; so intent did Julia seem upon what she was reading, that she did not appear to be aware of the Ophelia sort of decorations the mischievous Fanny was placing in her hair, or even of the close vicinity of a portly velvet-looking bee, who no doubt mistook the lovely faces round which he was hovering, for living flowers; in the back-ground of the picture, cattle were watering in a lake, while in the fore-ground were some deer, one of which stood with a fore paw up, as though he every moment expected to hear the sunbeam that was darting into his scarcely less brilliant eyes; the whole picture had a sultry dreaminess about it, that made one almost fancy one heard that low music of the summer air, the hum

of insects. Opposite to this picture, Cheveley stood transfixed, with a thousand conflicting and overwhelming feelings; but with the infatuation of a genuine lover, the idea in his own mind was clearly defined, that the original, with an accumulation of years and sorrow, (with a woman are they not synonymous?) was ten times more beautiful now, than she had been then, with the bloom and halo of youth and happiness around her. "Ah!" thought he, "had we but met then, or had we never met! Yet no, I would rather be the miserable hopeless wretch I am, than never have known you."

So abstracted was he by this train of reflection, that the old butler had entered, cast a furtive glance at the sideboard, to see whether any plate had by accident been left there, and hemmed twice without Lord Cheveley's hearing or perceiving him; but a more than usual potation of port having rendered the worthy Mr. Clinton (a domestic fixture of more than thirty years,) rather averse from unnecessary standing, he at length, after taking ocular dimensions of Cheveley from head to foot, and deciding in his own mind that he certainly *was* a gentleman, as the footman had reported, hemmed still louder, and boldly accosted him with "I beg your pardon, sir, but I understood you wanted to know Lady De Clifford's address?"

Not having heard Clinton's foot on the old Axminster carpet, before he heard his voice, Cheveley was so startled, that he nearly let the candle fall out of his hand, but recovering his presence of mind, he said, "Oh yes, I am sorry to have given you the trouble of coming."

"No trouble, sir," interrupted Clinton.

"But can you tell me where a parcel would find Lady De Clifford?"

"The best place, sir, would be to leave it here, or at my lord's house in Grosvenor-street, as if sent abroad it might miscarry, as they are at present on their way home."

"Indeed!" said Cheveley, "I understood that Lady De Clifford was dangerously ill at Venice?"

"Her ladyship had been very ill there, sir," replied Clinton, "but I am happy to say the last letters from Miss Neville were from Naples, and stated that my lady was sufficiently recovered to drive out, and that the family were to be in England by the end of January."

"Thank God!" thought Cheveley, and a burning weight felt removed from his heart.

Seeing the change that came over Cheveley's face, the old butler could not help risking the question of, "You know the ladies then, sir?"

"Yes, I have that pleasure."

"You may well call it that, sir," said the old man, wiping his eyes; "I have known them since they were born, and better or more amiable ladies never lived; as for her ladyship, she is a perfect angel, or she could not bear all she does, poor thing," added he with a deep sigh, for which Cheveley began to think he himself was bordering on the angelic tribe; but having no farther excuse for prolonging his stay, he again thanked the old man, and prepared to depart.

"Will you favour me with your name, sir?" said Clinton, with increased curiosity, as he followed him into the hall, "that I may let the ladies know who was inquiring for them?"

"Oh, it is of no consequence," said Cheveley, hurrying to the door, "as they will be in England so soon. I will call again when they arrive."

"Humph, a lover of Miss Fanny's, no doubt," thought the old man, as he cast a last glance at the young Marquis's handsome face and distinguished figure; "and certainly she will get a better bargain than poor Miss Julia."

Cheveley, on his return home, was too much excited to sleep: now that he had ascertained beyond a doubt that Julia was out of danger, his heart and his vanity (I fear with the best men they are closely allied) were both satisfied at her having been ill, for he knew from experience, that suffering is the only genuine ovation Absence can offer to Love!

CHAPTER XXV.

To curtain her sleepy world. Yon gentle hills,
 Robed in a garment of untrodden snow;
 Yon darksome rocks, whence icicles depend,
 So stainless, that their white glittering spires
 Tinge not the moon's pure beams; yon castled steep,
 Whose banner hangeth o'er the time-worn tower
 So idly, that rapt fancy deemeth it
 A metaphor of peace,—all form a scene
 Where musing solitude might love to lift
 Her soul above this sphere of earthliness.—P. B. SHELLEY.
 La foi, se réveillant comme un doux souvenir,
 Jette un rayon d'espoir sur mon pâle avenir,
 Sous l'ombre de la mort me ranime et m'enflamme,
 Et rend à mes vieux jours la jeunesse de l'âme.—DELAMARTINE.

It is hard to say which is the most ridiculous: pretensions to talent, without common capacity, or pretensions to beauty after time has long presented his *trousseau* of wrinkles and crowsfeet?—having taken upon each an usurious percentage of bloom and dimples!—*A Thought that often suggested itself to me when in London.*

THERE can be no doubt that external objects, and extraneous circumstances, are the

"Masters of passion, sways it to the moode
 Of what it likes or loathes:"

therefore is it, that love being an imaginative passion, the rough and harsher realities of life, which require all our energies to meet and to wrestle with, invariably reduce it to a degree of subordination, that change it from a tyrant to a slave :—whereas idleness is the cradle of love, luxury its nurse, and liberty its tutor ;—indulged and encouraged by these, it becomes almost insupportable, as it surfeits on its own fantasies ; for as Chaucer hath it,—

“ If love be searched well, and sought,
It is the sickness of the thought.”

And this sickness it is which blights and mildews every other wholesome blessing by which we are surrounded ; making us feel, like Rasselas in the Happy Valley, there is still an aching void, a something wanting ; which vacuum all the surrounding beauty and sunshine only renders the more apparent : and it was with this “sickness of the thought,” that Lord Cheveley was oppressed, as he drove into his princely domain ; the village bells ringing a merry peal, and bonfires gleaming from all the adjacent hills.

From the lodge to the house, (a distance of about a mile and a half, through a wood,) all the tenantry had assembled, and erected triumphal arches of evergreens, and such flowers as the season afforded. Cold as the weather was, all the young girls being dressed in white, and ranged on one side, gave a pretty and picturesque effect to the scene. Luckily for Cheveley, the shouts of the people were so deafening, as they took the horses from the carriage, that it saved him the trouble of saying or doing anything, but bowing right and left, with his hands pressed to his bosom ; the more especially as the two gentlemen in the rumble condescendingly waved their hats, and gave cheer for cheer with the peasantry ; while Mr. Sanford, in another post-chariot behind, went farther still ; by not only bowing almost as affably as his master, but applying his white pocket handkerchief to his eyes every time he did so ; and occasionally leaning his head pensively against a guncase that occupied the front of the carriage.

The house, or rather castle at Cheveley, was built in the time of Stephen ; and closely resembled the castle of Old Sarum, except that it was larger ; but, like it, was enclosed within : the same low circular turreted wall ; the entrance to which was by a large massy black iron gate, studded with large spiked nails, except about a quarter of a yard square on one side ; where was a cross-barred iron grate, like those of a prison, or convent door : within this gate was a paved amphitheatre, in a mosaic of long bugle-shaped stones, leading up to the castle ; between every third turret of this low round wall a cannon was placed : and on the ground underneath each cannon, a pyramid of balls ; from the centre of the wall on each side branched two immensely wide flights of flat stone steps, with stone balustrades, so wide and flat, that two persons

might with ease have walked down them abreast; these steps inclined gradually to a half circle, towards the back of the castle, terminating at the first terrace with most delicious gardens, laid out in the old Italian style, with colonnades of thick green bosquets, fountains, aviaries, square fish-ponds, labyrinths, and terrace above terrace; at the foot of these gardens, which occupied a perpendicular mile, was the most lovely valley that could be imagined, through which flowed a bright, babbling, dimpling stream: there was something child-like and joyous in the way this little brook dashed its crystal spray against the dull, stiff, old-maidish-looking stones, and then darted swiftly onward, as though afraid of their retaliating. This valley was full of cattle, and surrounded by hills or rather rocks, covered with arbutus and larch; and on one side of it was a grove of linden trees, about three-quarters of a mile in length, and terminated by a park-paling, which led into a deer park, celebrated for the beauty of its timber and the wildness of its fern. In the linden grove was a mausoleum erected to Lady Lucy Mowbray, Lord Cheveley's mother, who had made it a particular request that she might not be buried in the family vault. So sheltered was this beautiful spot, that the flowers with which it was embellished bloomed all the year round, and the soft blush of the Persian rose, mingled with

“The coy anemone, that ne'er uncloses
Her lips, until they're blown on by the wind.” (1)

And above all, breathed out the sweet and faithful wallflower, to which Treneuil has said in his beautiful lines,—

“Triomphe sans rivale, et que ta sainte fleur,
Croisse pour le tombeau, le trône, et le malheur.”

The whole place gave one not the idea of death, but of the shaded sleep of the blest, that precedes their waking in eternal light!

Above the terraced gardens rose the castle itself, like a diadem of coronetted turrets, closely resembling (as I have before stated) the castle of Old Sarum in King Stephen's time.

When Cheveley entered the low armoury that formed the hall, and had received and returned the salutations of some fifty domestics, and intimated to Mr. Marshall, the steward, that he would retain them all in their different stations, he repaired to the library: it was the last room he had been in, when, as a boy, his mother had been sent for to take him away, for having disturbed his uncle's political musings, by an ill-timed game of battledore and shuttlecock;—and, certainly, politics apart, no room could be worse adapted for such an amusement, it being “cumbered o'er with carving.” Old as the building was, this room, at the expense of a whole wing, had been converted into a lofty gallery: the ceiling was that of a

(1) H. Smith.

cathedral, between all the interstices of which were emblazoned the Cheveley's arms, while from the spiral roses, at equal distances, hung large silver lamps, like those used in foreign churches, each burner being in the form of the old Greek lamp. The room itself was wainscotted with old black oak, arabesqued with gold of an arras pattern; the books only occupied one side of the room, and were divided by stalls of carved oak; in each recess of which were crimson velvet seats, and over each stall was a bust. Down the opposite side of the room were four-and-twenty colossal statues, in carved wood, of the early church reformers and martyrs, which the late lord had many years before brought from Holland; they were in the Michael Angelo style, and for strength and expression could not have been excelled by him. In the panels at this side of the room were inserted portraits and historical pictures: here and there was an ancestor perpetuated by Holbein, in all the dignity of forked beards, jewelled vests, and lace ruffs. The historical pictures were very large, and only four in number: the subject of one was Henry the Eighth passing from his closet through a group of courtiers, and frowning at Cardinal Wolsey, thinking he had not yet set out for Calais, while the Cardinal was kneeling to present the despatches he had brought back; the expression of the king's face was so skilfully managed, that one almost fancied one saw it change from displeasure to delighted surprise. The second was King John signing Magna Charta: the mingled looks of anxiety, resolution, and defiance, in the countenances of the barons, were very fine, and the hand of the contemptible monarch seemed to tremble beneath it. The subject of the third picture was the marriage of Elizabeth of France, daughter of Henry the Second, to Philip the Second of Spain. The Bishop of Paris, according to the custom of 1559, was performing the marriage ceremony at the door of the church of Notre Dame. This was altogether a curious picture, done on three separate panels; and the demure look of the bride, the indifferent look of the bridegroom, the mechanical look of the bishop, the 'comme de raison' look of Henry the Second, the open mouths of the assembled crowd, and the perpendicular sleep of a little dog, that sat on Elizabeth's train, formed a perfect mosaic of negatives. The fourth and last was somewhat of a daub, and not a very interesting subject;—it was Prince Edward, son of Henry the Third, making the soldiers of Simon De Montford, Earl of Leicester, ride races, in order to escape from them. But over the high old carved chimney-piece, was a 'right merrie' picture of Ben Johnson carousing at the Mermaid, with Shakspeare, Herrick, and Howel; they were seated round a table covered with dropsical-looking flasks, with long narrow necks, and ample glasses, with tall stems.

“The rare arch poet”

presided in a chair rather higher than the rest, with flushed face, and collar somewhat awry, as though sack and sherries had done their office. James Howel had his eyes filially turned away from his poetical sire's excesses, upon a quaint-looking old book, in a dilapidated cover. Not so Herrick; he seemed to think that the true source of inspiration was to be derived from seeing Ben

“Grow deeply and divinely drunk:”

while the then undeified “Will,” being but of small note among them, was peering upward over his high-backed chair, as he bestowed sundry ocular civilities upon a ‘sweet Anne Page’ looking damsel, in a pointed hat and snow-white ruff, who was enacting the part of Hebe to these choice spirits. In the window hung a magpie’s cage; and through the narrow panes from the outside peeped Martin Donne and Alleyne the player, the latter twitching Donne’s cloak, and pointing archly to Shakspeare. There was a life in this picture that made one listen breathlessly to hear their mirth, till one turned with a sigh to the quotation from Herrick’s ode, in gilt old English letters beneath it, and asked with him—

“Ah! Ben,

Say how or when

Shall we, thy guests,

Meet at those lyric feasts,

Made at the Sun,

The Dog, the Triple Tun;

Where we such clusters had,

As made us nobly wild, not mad?

And yet each verse of thine

Outdid the meat, outdid the frolic wine!”

This room, or rather gallery, terminated in one large deep mullion window, which overlooked the terraced gardens, while a door on the right side of the window opened into an orangery of an immense extent,

“And cheated churlish winter with sweet summer airs;”

thus creating that perfect luxury, which is formed by gothic magnificence combined with modern comfort. Cheveley sighed as he looked round this, to him, splendid banishment: there was the old high-backed pointed Henry the Seventh’s chair, that he had last seen his poor uncle in, the morning he had been expelled; there, too, were the bootkins he had so often stumbled over, and the reading-table, which in those days he had hated, as an altar to Tacita; for never dare he either move or speak when it was drawn to the fire; and with these mementos, the recollection of the

“Smiles, the tears of boyhood’s years,”

crowded thick and fast upon him: but soon his thoughts reverted to Julia, and his heart yearned to exchange the splendid halls of his fathers, for the large, dingy, comfortless rooms of Il Leone

Bianco at Venice. "Ah!" thought he, "were she but mistress of this place, I could understand what people meant by calling it charming; but as it is, there is a gloom and desolation about it that is to me perfectly insupportable." As if nature herself were angry at so unjust an aspersion, a flood of golden light from the setting sun at this moment streamed through the illuminated window, and made the whole gallery gorgeous with its prismatic colours. Cheveley walked to the window: the gardens, with their green terraces and bosquets, even at that bare season, were lovely, and the snow-capped hills in the distance looked like so many white-veiled vestals doing homage to the departing god of day.

Nature never appeals in vain, even to the most wretched. The door of the orangery was open: Cheveley walked through it to the gardens; the air was redolent of orange blossoms and magnolias from a neighbouring hot-house; this recalled to him his mother's love of flowers in general, and these flowers in particular, and his heart was in his eyes, as he mechanically bent his steps towards her grave, in the grove of lindens. He paused when he came to the little brook, and stood and listened to it, for it spoke to him of other days: on its margin how often had he played, while his mother had sat reading under a large hospitable tree, now leafless, but bright with the setting sun, which, like an eastern monarch, was sinking into his bed of gold, while the silver crescent of the young moon had risen in the clear cold sky to take his place. "Yes, the tree is there still," said he, thinking aloud, "but where is she now? *there*, if ever mortal was," added Cheveley, as he raised his eyes to heaven, where the pale gentle-looking moon shone out like an emblem of purity and peace. A herd coming to water the cattle, he walked on, and turned down the avenue of lindens. How subjugating, yet exalting, are the feelings with which the graves of those we love inspire us; there our dust suffers, till it seems brought as low as theirs. We weep, we struggle, we upbraid our mother earth, but there also we pray, till our spirit soars to God, and to theirs. There is a turbulence in sin that we feel would disturb their eternal rest, and as our thoughts bear our hearts upward, we resolve to renounce it, for the passions sleep, when conscience awakes, and amid the silence of death we distinctly hear "her still small voice;" but, alas, back in the busy world again, among its turmoils and its temptations, she in her turn sleeps, and the counsel we took with the sainted dead is forgotten or weakened by the aggression and example of the living. Many were the tears that Cheveley shed at his mother's grave, although it was six years since her death; and, with the true waywardness of sorrow, at one moment he thanked God that she was spared the knowledge of all his present sufferings, while the next he wished her back on earth to cheer and console him; and

yet she could not have done either, for, albeit, unlike Lord De Clifford's mother, he dared not have made her the confidant of the unhallowed love that was consuming him ; or if he had, he would have received neither consolation nor encouragement. So long had he lingered in the grove of lindens, that it was nearly eight o'clock when he returned to the castle, where his solitary dinner awaited him ; it was almost an unnecessary ceremony his sitting down to it, for eat he could not. The dining-room looked into the park ; he undrew the window curtain, and sat in the window, listening abstractedly to the noise of the deer beneath it. His thoughts from habit flew back to Venice, then again they reverted to his mother : he saw her as he had seen her last ; her parting "God bless you" rang in his ear, and he became involved in a thousand metaphysical speculations, as he gazed upon the skies, and read

"The gospel of the stars, great nature's holy writ ;"

and who ever did so without longing to be as one of them, far from this dull earth, a light with God in heaven? At length Cheveley rose, and returned to the library. "I will try and read," said he ; and accordingly he took down one book after another, but his thoughts wandered, and by the time he got to the end of a page he did not know one word that was in it. He took up a pen to write to Saville, when he recollected that he would be in England before the letter could reach him ; but out of the fulness of the heart, the pen, as well as the mouth, speaketh, and he wrote the following lines :—

Near where the bee-loved lindens (1) fling
Their deep and odorous shade,
And the first roses of the spring
Blush through the emerald glade.

There dost thou sleep, sweet mother mine ;
And as calmly, purely bright
Be every joy that now is thine,
As thou wert to my mortal sight.

No more ! no more ! this heart can feel,
As when erst thy dove-like voice
Would o'er its troubled waters steal
With fresh hopes that said "rejoice !"

But then the love I felt was bliss,
For 't was love of God and thee ;
Now 't is a deep and dark abyss
Of sin, grief, and misery ;

Of sin wrought through angelic power :
As when of old, daughters of earth
Saw, in a bright but fatal hour,
Fair forms of heavenly birth.

(1) See Virgil's beautiful description of the industrious corycian, where he notices the love of bees for the flower of the linden or lime tree.

And tempting angels from their sphere
 Turned to guilt seraphic love,
 Which made them hopeless wanderers here,
 And branded exiles from above.

Yet, mother, gentle mother, no!
 All *thy* love has not been lost;
 Guilt has not wreck'd, though passion's flow
 Leaves my spirit tempest lost.

For how can I forget the care
 That you lavish'd on my youth?
 The morning walk, the evening prayer,
 Then the kiss for telling truth!

Still do I see thee, as of old,
 Reading, 'neath some fav'rite tree,
 Old Spenser's page of green and gold,
 Stereotyped in Faërie.

While Dash, and Bell, and I, would play,
 And roll on the velvet green,
 With noise enough to scare away
 The moth-wing'd "Faërie Queen."

Till lured back by thy gentle call,
 (Ah! 't was never heard in vain),
 The panting dogs, spoilt boy, and all,
 First were chid, then kiss'd again.

The very daisy-chains you twined,
 Then to keep your urchin still,
 Doth yet his wayward spirit bind,
 Now to do what *was* your will.

I often think, perchance, the dead,
 Silent vigils o'er us keep,
 And by them we 're safely led
 Through paths o'er which we vainly weep.

Yet again I've ask'd, in hallow'd ground,
 Their dust beneath, their souls above us,
 'Mid the immortal joys they've found,
If still they know, if still they love us?

About a fortnight after Cheveley had been in the country, he went over to Campfield to dine at Lord's Sudbury's, who at the time had the house filled with Christmas guests. Lord Sudbury was a good little man in his way, for he never got in any one else's way,—and that in this world is a virtue. Nature and chance had certainly had a difference of opinion about him, as the former had decided that he should not be one of her nobility, while the latter decreed that he should be one of ours. In person he was short, and what the common Irish expressively term *unsignified*, being something between an English hair-dresser's apprentice, and the garçon of a French café; but he never did any harm, as far as a man can be said to be guiltless of it, who never does

any good. Her ladyship was called among her own clique a "very superior woman," for her personal attractions never jostled any one's, having a face like one of Don Quixote's unavailing regrets, and a figure long and heavy as one of Sancho's slumbers; add to which, there was a deep cerulean tinge in her character, that propelled her into reading scientific books that she did not understand, and talking of them afterwards. She was a great admirer of what the world stuccoes with the name of "talent"—that is, provided Fame had stamped the ore as current; for, as to playing the Columbus to any one's mind, that was beyond her—as, indeed, it is beyond most women; for they generally see with other people's eyes, hear with other people's ears, decide with other people's judgment, and parrot forth other people's opinions.

When Lord Cheveley, arrived, the assembled group consisted of the Duke and Duchess of Darlington. The Duchess was a handsome blonde, always dressed to perfection, with a very sweet countenance, and gentle manner. The Duke—was a Duke, and what more need any man be? As he had never done any one any harm, I would fain say nothing against him; but truth compels me to own that he was a Whig. Yet, for that matter, so is the Duke of Devonshire; and every one who knows him likes and esteems him with reason; and as for his politics, they only prove that the best are liable to error, and that there is nothing perfect in this best of all possible worlds. Though Lord Sudbury was an ultra Tory, Christmas, like death, levelled all distinctions at Campfield; so that at the moment of Cheveley's entrée, Mr. Spoonbill had full possession of Mr. Tom Dareall's button, the Radical member for one of the metropolitan boroughs, discussing the eternal subject of Lord Denham, and little dreaming how scurvily his dear friends the Whigs were actually using him, or the disgraceful exposé that a few months would make.

Mr. Tom Dareall was most popular both among the ladies and the Levites, and was a perfect Sheridan in his management of those intricate and troublesome human burrs called creditors. His toilette was always unexceptionable, and his turn-out exceedingly clever, as he generally *drove duns*;—in short, he was one of those men who had never been, and would never at any epoch of his life be, called "Mister." Even in the mouths of young ladies he was "Tom Dareall," being a favourite with every one except Mr. Herbert Grimstone, whom he had once ousted at Triverton.

On an ottoman sat Lord St. Leger, a young man of moderate capacity, and immoderate fortune, who was thought literary by the young ladies in Belgrave Square and May Fair, from the fact of his having contributed a little inanity to the "Book of Beauty," and divers annuals, which had been duly lauded in the "Investigator" and other impartial and independent papers, as being "exceed-

ingly graceful, and evincing much genuine talent." Being one of the best "parties" in England, he was now surrounded by a group of young ladies, who laughed at and admired every thing he said, as though he had talked diamonds and pearls. But hunger will make the brightest and lightest spirit philosophical and reflective; so his lordship, with a yawn, hazarded the very novel remark, of how long and stupid the half hour before dinner always appeared!—upon which, with an invulnerable vanity, which did them great credit, inasmuch as that it was not in the least wounded at this ungallant speech, the first young lady said, in a stage whisper, to her companions behind his lordship, which resounded from the three other young ladies, like the triple echo at Killarney, "What a clever creature he is!" "And how handsome!" added the first speaker, who had been out six years, and was dressing, and growing younger in consequence. Lord St. Leger thought the half hour before dinner not so stupid, after all; and that Harriet Winterberry (the last speaker) "really was a very fine girl"—"woman" would have been the more appropriate term; but, as I have before said, his lordship was in the habit of writing for the *Annals*, and no doubt that made him imaginative; and certainly "girl" was a more poetical word than "woman."

In a priedieu, at a little distance from this group, sat a little woman, with sharp features, and a sharper voice; a tall man stood by her, leaning listlessly on the back of the priedieu, talking Greek to her, inasmuch as he was expatiating upon the thrilling interest, and masterly anatomy of human nature, in that most powerfully written and wonderful book, "*Oliver Twist*."

"Never," said he, "did any book take such complete possession of me as that. Sleeping or waking, I had poor Oliver's pale face still before me. I never asked a question, but it seemed answered with the Dodger's antithetical 'Oh, no.' My dreams were still darkened by the ruffian Sikes, or infected by the villainous old Jew; and every pool I passed in the street seemed to be red with poor Nancy's blood:—in short," concluded Mr. Vavasor, "I would rather know Dickens than any living author; for although he does occasionally write beautiful sentiments, that seem to evince deep feeling, yet I am convinced that he has a heart, and that it is in the right place."

"Why, of course," replied the lady with the sharp voice, "if he writes beautiful sentiments, that show deep feeling, that proves he has a heart. So, begging your pardon, Mr. Vavasor, though you may be a very clever man, I think you are talking great nonsense; for how can people write feelings, if they have n't them?"

Mr. Vavasor smiled somewhat contemptuously at the lady's logic, and contented himself with repeating—"Yes, that '*Oliver Twist*' is a wonderful book."

“Hem—I almost forget it—something about a boy in a work-house, is n’t it?” asked the sharp voice.

Mr. Vavasor changed the subject in despair, but hit upon one almost as bad, being more intellectual. “Have you seen Charles Kean’s ‘Hamlet?’—is it not perfect?”

Now the lady with the sharp voice, having no personal or individual *judgment* was determined to compromise the matter, by always having an *opinion* of her own; and therefore replied, flatly,—

“Why, I do n’t think he’s as wonderful as some of the papers say, or as bad as others say; there’s always a medium, you know.”

Mr. Vavasor removed himself to the other end of the room, and took refuge behind one of the county ladies, who sat fat and fidgety on the edge of her chair, in a thick brocade gown and a profusion of blonde, (now that both are out of fashion,) not venturing to look to the right or the left, except when her husband, who stood near her, a portly man, in a blue coat, gilt buttons, and white waistcoat, occasionally stooped down and whispered, “there, my dear, that’s the duchess, sitting next her ladyship on the sofa,” or, “I wonder how long it will be before we have dinner?”

Lady Sudbury and the Duchess of Darlington occupied one sofa, and between them sat a beautiful little Blenheim dog, of the name of Juan; his large, black, eastern eyes, looking languidly round, as though he was bored to death, and wondered with Mr. Palmer, (the county gentleman,) when dinner would be ready; one paw rested on Lady Sudbury’s soft green velvet dress, while she stroked one of his long silken Titian-like ears, and complained to the duchess of the dreadful headaches she had had lately.

“It’s your mind, dear Lady Sudbury,” said her grace, with a half smile; “you really study too much.”

“Have you seen,” inquired Lady Sudbury, modestly waiving the accusation, “have you seen this new American author, Mr. Snobguess?”

“No,” replied the duchess.

“Oh, you should see him,” said Lady Sudbury, “for he is writing a book about England, and means to mention all the beauties; but he is to be here to-day; Lady Stepastray, who you know has a perfect menagerie of lions always about her, is to bring him to dinner, and they stay till after Christmas; I told her to tell him, that he must not be disappointed if he finds me very dull, for I have been suffering so much with my head lately.”

While Lady Sudbury was still speaking, a page advanced, and when she had ceased, announced Lady Stepastray and Mr. Snobguess. The latter, having been duly presented by the former, made his best Broadway bow, and said,

“I’m sorry, *my lady*, to hear that you’ve not been quite roight (right) about the head lately.”

The duchess smiled ; Lady Sudbury looked notes of interrogation, and Mr. Rufus Snobguess came to a full stop, by seizing poor little Juan's unoccupied ear ; which piece of low-bred Yankee familiarity naturally roused his Blenheim blood, and set him howling. Reader, hast ever seen a shepherdess worked in a sampler, looking down upon a pet lamb with a look of softness and vacuity, produced by the reflection of green silk grass, three inches below her eyes, studded with pink silk roses, waving one inch above her hat and crook ? if so, exert thy memory, to recall the vision ; this done, stretch thy imagination to the contemplation of the same shepherdess, evaporating on a bank of primroses, and you will behold the intellectual and ethereal Lady Stepastray ; there was a feline gentleness in her ladyship's manner, a mewling softness in her ladyship's voice, that was perfectly entrapping. She had a graceful habit of crossing her left hand over her right wrist, and then drawing both in towards her chest, that gave a picturesque air to her whole figure ; between that of a Magdalene and a Morris-dancer. Some forty years ago, she had, through the medium of a Scotch divorce, disembarrassed herself of her first husband ; and so well had this severe discipline agreed with him, that he was still walking about and merry, long after the silent tomb had received his successor. An interesting youth, now about two-and-forty, was the result of her ladyship's first marriage ; but her feelings were of that refined and delicate nature, that she seldom saw him, and few had ever heard of him : whether it was the almost infantine simplicity of her thoughts that continued to impart such youth to her appearance, I cannot take upon me say ; but certain it is, that it seemed as if she and Time had thrown for victory, and that she had decidedly won. Seeming to think that death was out of the question for her, she compromised the matter by dyeing her hair, and rejuvenating her dress every year ; and though she had not entirely left off love, she had within the last ten years taken to literature, and written some charming works ; one called the " Chamberlain's Daughter," and another, the " Old Road to Ruin," which, considering she had been going it for the last fifty years, she could not have possibly selected a subject with which she was more conversant ; having for a similar number of years thoroughly wormed herself, by falsehood, flattery, and accommodating conduct, into the good graces of every one, either in society, or literature, whom she thought worth toadying ; her plan being, like that of the illustrious Roman, who stood aloof on the top of the hill, till he saw which side victory favoured, to be neuter in all differences, conjugal or otherwise, till she saw which party was the strongest, and then join that. However, I'm sure this only arose from her love of being in the fashion ; for however kind one may have been to

people, however great and continued the benefits one may have bestowed upon them, and however inordinate their expressions and professions of gratitude may be, let but misfortune come to us, and like a blot of ink, upon a fair transcript, it seems to obliterate every thing. As I have never yet met with any one who had succeeded in reading her ladyship's books, it may be interesting to people to know the style of her writings; this they may do through a very delightful medium, that of reading the ninth number of "Nicholas Nickleby," as the "Chamberlain's Daughter," and the "Old Road to Ruin," were precisely in the same milk-and-water-run-mad school of "The Lady Flabella;" that charming novel which Kate Nickleby read out to Mrs. Wititterly, and which that lady thought "so soft," while Kate, (a point in which most persons will be likely to agree with her,) thought it "very soft."

However, thanks to her dinners, and Fuzboz's good digestion and consequent gratitude, he had manufactured a charming biography of "this gifted lady," accompanied by a youthful portrait, for one of the magazines. In this interesting life, the first husband, and the old son, were both carefully suppressed, or rather lopped off, as useless excrescences with which the public had nothing to do; and then Fuzboz proceeded to inform them, that her ladyship's thirst for knowledge (that abstruse and metaphysical knowledge, beyond the capacity of most of her sex) had burst forth in uncontrollable force even from her earliest infancy; no wonder, then, that it had been quenched by such deep draughts from the "Pierean spring," when we consider the length of time that had elapsed from that period up to the present. So that Fuzboz's concluding peroration, bidding the world wonder at and admire the result of her ladyship's studies, was almost superfluous. At the advent of each succeeding work, (piece of work would be a more appropriate term, as they had always to be "done into English by several hands," as the poor publisher knew to his cost, though to do them into sense was a miracle beyond the power of modern times,)—well, at the advent of each succeeding work, Lady Stepastray was sure to possess herself of a classical gold inkstand, or a costly jewelled pen, or sometimes both, which were paraded to the fashionable and literary world by turns, varying their history for each, as to authors, and authors' wives. It was "Look, my dear Mr. or Mrs. So and So, the dear Duke of — (naming a royal duke) sent me these the other day, with such a pretty letter, thanking me for my book, and saying, that as no one made such good use of their pen, he must send me these implements for writing, in the hope of inducing me to write more; now it was so very prettily expressed you can't think!"—The lords and ladies heard the same story in their turn, with this difference, that the royal duke was changed to "the celebrated author of so and so;"

but this sometimes entailed another addition, as her auditor would exclaim—"Dear Lady Stepastray, do show me the letter, for I should so like to see his handwriting: whereupon, her ladyship was overpowered with a very natural confusion, and looking blush-ways, simpered out, "Oh, I thought it looked so vain to keep it, that I burned it."

In addition to being a great genius, Lady Stepastray was determined to grow into a young beauty, and it was curious to see the dexterity with which she contrived to give people notice of this, by wrapping up the fact in a pretended insult. Thus she would, *à propos de bottes*, say to some blooming beauty of nineteen, "dear Lady Jane," or Caroline, as the case might be, "you are much too beautiful to go through this world without envy and ill-nature; people are so ill-natured; only think of Lady M. saying to me the other day, 'ah! it's all very fine, Lady Stepastray, but I'm certain the men would never read your books as they do, if you were not such a pretty woman!' Now, so very ill-natured, you know, because reviewers (with a great emphasis on the word) don't care whether one is pretty or not; but, the fact is, Lady M., being an authoress herself, is jealous of me!"

Another very ingenious device of Lady Stepastray's was silently to claim the authorship of every very clever book that came out anonymously: this she achieved by looking confused, or abruptly changing the subject, when the merits of the work were discussed; or if any one remarked—"it is evidently in so and so's style, and, after all, I think it must be theirs;" she would look down with a conscious smile, and murmur, "No, no, it is not Mr. B.'s or Mrs. G.'s, I have reason to know;" and then if laughingly taxed by her auditors, who knew full well she could not write such a book, with the authorship, she would playfully tap them on the wrist, and smilingly walk away, as she said, "What right have you to suppose it's mine? I have not owned it. Now, pray, don't go and say that I wrote it, for I—I mean the person who wrote it—I know wishes it to be kept a profound secret!"

Lady Stepastray, as soon as she had dulcified sufficiently with Lady Sudbury and the duchess, glided across the room, and professed herself overwhelmed with delight to see dear Lord Cheveley; and so far she was sincere, that she really was always rejoiced to see any one that was either great, or rich, or celebrated. Cheveley was truly grateful when dinner was announced, as it relieved him from the "fadeurs" of Lady Stepastray, whose talk was about as piquante as cold veal without salt. Lord Sudbury, having passed on with the Duchess of Darlington, and the Duke with Lady Sudbury, it became Cheveley's turn to offer his arm to Lady Florence Lindley, Lord Sudbury's sister, a handsome and agreeable woman, of about thirty, who seemed the only person

unconscious of these two qualifications; the young ladies being distributed between Lord St. Leger, Tom Dareall, and Mr. Palmer, while Mrs. Palmer availed herself of the benefit of clergy, in the chaplain's left arm. Lady Stepastray fell to the lot of Mr. Spoonbill, and catching a glimpse of Mrs. Palmer athwart that gentleman's voluminous shirt-frill, had barely time to dole out a homœopathic dose of civility suited to a country gentleman's wife, in the form of a slight and distant bow, when she perceived her "protégé," Mr. Snobguess, towing himself after her.

"'Pon honour! *my lady*," said he, sidling up to her, "this *aint* treating us according to Hoyle though, neither; for I think there should be a lady to every gentleman."

"And so there is a lady to every *gentleman*," said Mr. Spoonbill, tartly, as he took a rapid survey of Mr. Snobguess's disjointed figure, French-polished mangle-wurzel-looking face, and the lock of hair, enclosed in a square sarcophagus of pearls, that decorated his shirt.

"Mr. Spoonbill, Mr. Snobguess, the celebrated American author," tittered Lady Stepastray, slightly pressing Mr. Spoonbill's arm, as an admonition to be more civil.

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Snobguess, winking his right eye, and wagging his head, without taking any further notice of the introduction,—“you're provided for, fast enough, sir, and those may laugh that win.”

Upon entering the dining-room, Lady Stepastray contrived to place herself on one side of Lord Cheveley, while Mr. Spoonbill sat on her right hand; and, much to his annoyance, Mr. Snobguess planted himself on his right. But, with the best intentions in the world upon the part of Lady Stepastray, Lady Florence made herself so agreeable to Cheveley, as her chief conversation consisted in praising and asking questions about “dear” Lady De Clifford, that poor Lady Stepastray was fain to content herself with “taste, Shakspeare, high-life, the musical glasses,” and Mr. Spoonbill.

“Well!” said Mr. Snobguess, looking round the table, “if this *aint* for all the world like a Turkish bazaar.”

“How so?” simpered Lady Stepastray.

“Why, because there's something of every *think*—there's gold plate enough for half-a-dozen Delhi merchants: then the fruit growing, as it were, out of the table, and the meat, fish, poultry, and vegetables, that keep *continually* coming round, to say nothink of the ladies, whom I guess are as much slaves in England as in Turkey, makes it *eg-zactly* a Turkish bazaar.”

“Yes—yes—what a very original idea!” said Lady Stepastray, crossing her hands, and looking admiringly up into Mr. Snobguess's face; “I do hope you'll put that in your book.”

“I’ll make a note of it sure-*ly*,” replied Snobguess. But the word “book” seemed to awaken some remembrance; for immediately after, he conveyed something from his coat-pocket under his napkin; and a sort of rumbling, rustling noise commenced, which excited Mr. Spoonbill’s curiosity. Ever and anon he cast a wistful glance towards Mr. Snobguess’s lap; at length he thought he perceived a small book!—and he did perceive one, for that very morning, preparatory to his visit to Campfield, Mr. Snobguess had expended a shilling upon a book called “*Etiquette for Gentlemen!*” and, with an ingenuity peculiar to genius, he was now filling up the interstices of time by discussing mutton and manners at one and the same moment.

Shortly after the discovery of the book, Mr. Spoonbill observed that Mr. Snobguess’s head kept bobbing and ducking at a tremendous rate;—the fact was, the plateau was very large, as it consisted of a copy of the bronze horses at Monte Cavallo, and this intercepted his view of the people on the opposite side of the table, among whom was Lady Sudbury. But at length catching a glimpse of her, he held up a wine-glass, against which he jingled a fork, the better to call attention, as he roared out, in a loud voice, “The pleasure of wine with you, *my lady*.” It was with difficulty that every one suppressed their laughter, while Lady Sudbury seemed almost too much surprised to bow an acknowledgment of Mr. Snobguess’s “polite attention!” which he was about to extend to Lady Stepastray; when Mr. Spoonbill turning to her at the same moment, to conceal his laughter, prevented her seeing or returning Mr. Snobguess’s nod: whereupon he exclaimed theatrically, giving Mr. Spoonbill a dig in the side,

“ ‘You give me most egregious indignity.’ ”

At this, Mr. Spoonbill, who was half inclined to resent such undesired or undeserved familiarity, turned quickly round; but thinking better of it, answered from the same play—

“ ‘Ay, with all my heart; and thou art worthy of it.’ ”

After this, Mr. Snobguess became too much interested in his dinner to talk any more; and the conversation between Lady Stepastray and Mr. Spoonbill turning upon pictures, and the latter happening to say he should much like to see a very fine Annibal Caracci that he understood had been recently added to the gallery at Cheveley Place, Lord Cheveley introduced himself by saying he should be happy to show it to him any day he would come over to Cheveley. Mr. Spoonbill thanked him, and as he did so, thought he had seen his face some where before, but had not the slightest suspicion that he was indebted to his defence of Lady De Clifford at the Athenæum for Lord Cheveley’s evident good-will towards him. So little do any of us know the motives, or shades of motives, that actuate persons in society in their conduct towards us:

often originating in ourselves, and taking their tone from the word or look we may have hazarded for or against them, at times and places long since forgotten by us.

In the evening, Lady Stepastray was determined to appropriate Lord Cheveley to herself; and when some of the party had sat down to cards, and others had repaired to the music-gallery, she seated herself beside him, and gracefully crossing her hands, as was her wont, mewed out a mingled lament and panegyric upon the late Lord Cheveley.

"Yes, yes, my dear Lord Cheveley," she began, "your uncle died in such a thorough-bred way, so like a gentleman, as he had lived. Do you know he had been reading my book, 'The Old Road to Ruin,' and he said to his man, 'Lounds, I have torn a leaf out of Lady Stepastray's book : get it rebound ;' and he sank back and died."

"I'm not surprised," said Cheveley, with a mingled feeling of contempt and disgust, that made him order his carriage, as the servant took Lady Stepastray's tea-cup.

The night was clear and cold, and the sky gemmed with stars, that looked brighter and farther from the earth than usual ; before he reached home, Cheveley had decided in his own mind that since his return to England he had only met two people worth knowing—Lady Florence Lindley and Mr. Spoonbill.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"Parvum parva decent."

Take an old woman and roast her well,

And baste her well with cheese,

And put her out of a frosty night, and ten to one but she'll freeze ;

Take her in the next morning,

And rub her down with straw,

And put her by the fireside, 'tis ten to one but she'll thaw.

NURSERY ANTHOLOGY.

"Talking of age," says one of our Sir Oracles, "the longer women live the younger they grow. I know ladies who six years ago rated at thirty-five, and who now stand at twenty-nine. It is next to impossible for a woman to get over forty. This is the 'pons asinorum,' at which the sex invariably stick. The only person I ever met with who confessed she had passed this barrier, was an old lady of eighty ; but then her great-grandson was a lad of eighteen."

It was towards the end of February ; the De Cliffords had been in England about a month, and Fanny and Saville were to be married in a fortnight ; after which time Lady De Clifford had received notice that she was to go down to Grimstone, for Lord De Clifford had entered into a new "liaison." He seemed to have a predilection for governesses, for Mademoiselle D'Antoville's suc-

cessor was a Devonshire woman, who had kept a school at Sidmouth; but what was exceedingly convenient, her brother was a low writer for the press, which, while it secured puffing on the one hand, also guaranteed the suppression of all disagreeable truths on the other, and enabled Lord De Clifford to give whatever colouring he pleased to his own actions; besides, having many plans to organize prior to the next election, every day convinced him more and more of the expediency and truth of his exemplary parent's assertion, that he would be much freer and better living "*ong gor song*." Owing to Fanny's marriage, he was unable to carry this point as soon as he could have wished, but the day after that event everything was arranged for Lady De Clifford's departure.

It was a cold gloomy morning in February; Lord De Clifford had been closeted for a long time in the library with Miles Datchet, who, at length, left the house, looking agitated and thoughtful beyond measure, to the infinite surprise of the servants, who had always seen and thought him the merriest soul living. Shortly after, Lord De Clifford also went out, but his head was higher, and his step, if possible, more pompous than usual.

In the drawing-room were assembled Fanny, Saville, and Herbert Grimstone, who, however, was yawning over the fire, preparatory to his going down to his mother's in Bruton Street, with whom he had a little business, from which he hoped to reap pounds *sterling* benefit. The fact was, that some literary cronies of his had requested him to procure Lady De Clifford's picture and that of her child, for the "*Book of Beauty*," or the gems, or the something of beauty; upon which Herbert had informed them that his brother detested anything like publicity for his wife, but that if they would insert a portrait of his mother instead, this would greatly oblige them, and he would take care to get the book additionally puffed when it came out. Mr. Snobguess had also read him a glowing panegyric upon Lady De Clifford and her sister, from his book, in which he had declared they were "*exceeding* fine women, and would even be thought such in New York." Herbert pressed his hand, thanked him with tears in his eyes, and said that nothing could give *him*, individually, more pleasure than to hear his sister-in-law's praises, but that he knew his brother's rooted aversion to having any public mention made of his wife; if, therefore, Mr. Snobguess could obliterate the passage, and, without taking up more room in his valuable work, transfer the eulogium to the dowager, encircling the whole with a comparison about the mother of the Gracchi, and hint that they the Gracchi (Anglice, Grimstones) derived all their extraordinary talents from her, it would be much more acceptable, and he and his brother would be happy to do anything for Mr. Snobguess in return. "You understand, my dear sir," continued Herbert, in

a filial and affectionate voice, "I would not ask you to allude to us, or our humble talents, whatever they may be, but on my mother's account, and to please her is my brother's and my constant study."

Mr. Snobguess declared that he was *cruel dutiful*, and that it did him *uncommon* credit, and that though he was sorry to leave the other ladies out, as he had considered them *quite the go!* the alteration should be made.

Now it was to impart this intelligence to his mother, and to accompany her to Chalon's to sit for her portrait, that Mr. Herbert Grimstone was refreshing himself over the fire with a few invigorating yawns, previous to his departure for Bruton-street: pushing his hat back, and stretching his arms above his head for the third time, he exclaimed, as if in answer to his own thoughts,—

"'Pon my soul, I don't know what they're about; I can't conceive why they don't do something for me and De Clifford! I hear Denham is devilishly discontented out there too."

Though this speech was evidently a soliloquy, and not addressed to him, Saville replied, "why you can hardly expect great advancement just yet; you must go a step beyond Timbuctoo, and write a book, proving or rather arguing, that the height of virtue consists in breaking every commandment, or else, what is better, do it—for that, now-a-days, is the surest stepping-stone to literary or political advancement; let me see, unfortunately you have no wife, nor children, nor sisters,—I have it," cried Saville, in a Eurika tone, "go off with your mother."

"I have always heard," said Fanny, with great solemnity, looking up from the table where she was writing, "that crime carries its own punishment along with it, but that would be *proving* it with a vengeance!"

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Mr. Herbert Grimstone, as he dragged himself out of the room, for the joke being only against his mother, he enjoyed it as much as any one.

After that amiable and exemplary lady had been made acquainted with the purport of her son's visit, long and varying was the consultation that took place, as to what dress and attitude she should sit for her picture in.

"I think, my dear mamma," ventured Herbert at last, "you never look so well as when you are writing; your eyelids are so remarkably handsome; there, so," continued he, taking up a pen, and accidentally on purpose pushing over a banker's book, that was lying on the table, on which he began to write pantomimically.

His dear mamma took the pen, and in good earnest wrote him a draft for a thousand pounds. "There, my dear," said she, pushing it over to him, "I know young men have many expenses, and this may be of use to you, but do not mention it to your

brother, as his wife might hear it; and I was saying the other day, that I thought she could do very well without carriage-horses when she got down to Grimstone; so you understand, it is as well not."

"My dear mamma," said Herbert, gallantly kissing his revered parent's hand, "I always consider every thing you say to me as sacred, and I believe you have never found me betray your confidence, so you may take the ghost's word for a thousand pounds; but," added he, smiling, "I assure you, when I began designing the pose of your picture, I had no idea I was such a good *draftsman*!"

Her ladyship's brain being invariably pun-proof, she merely replied,—

"Ah, my dear, you always *was* vaustly clever at drawing."

"Yes, my dear mamma, I certainly have *drawn* a great deal in my time, but it is a propensity I should wish you to *check*, at least as far as etchings go."

"Tut, tut, my dear, it is a delightful talent, and it does you great credit to get through so much."

"I do not know, one's resources get exhausted at last; and for my part I would rather have a '*carte blanche*,' than the finest drawings in the world."

"With your talents, my dear Herbert, to be so modest, does great credit to your head and hert!"

"Talent, my dear mamma, as Snobguess the American author was explaining to me to-day, is invariably derived from the mother, so I may have some pretensions to it."

"Very just observation, my dear, for your father was a perfect fool."

"Poor man, so I should think," thought Herbert, but he did not say it, for his mother had from infancy instilled into him, that the truth ought not to be spoken at all times.

After a few more paternal and filial compliments, it was decided that her ladyship should go to Madame Girardot's to choose a head-dress for her picture. Herbert did not much relish the idea of being boxed up in a close carriage with his dear mamma, and terminating the day with a five o'clock dinner; but still a thousand pounds are not to be got for nothing, and as parliament had opened with a very stormy session, in which the magnates had followed Locke's educational advice of "*laying on the blows with reasoning between*," he would have a good excuse for getting away soon after dinner.

"My dear," said the dowager, "you must come with me to Madame Girardot's, for I am not much in the habit of going to *these here* sort of milliners, as Frump generally makes all my caps and bonnets; but you see so many French ladies, that you will be able to choose me something *dégaugée* and pretty."

“My dear mamma, I know no one who has such good taste in dress as yourself, but I shall be happy to accompany you.”

Accordingly to Madame Girardot's they drove, and the dowager having paused on the stairs to remark “how *vaustly* impertinent it was of such people to have mahogany doors and window frames,” proceeded to the show-room, where Lady Sudbury and Lady Stepastray were trying on things, the former a *Ceres* velvet toque, the latter a sort of zephyr cap, on every web of which fifteen was stamped. Madame Girardot, who had been arranging the folds of the *Ceres* toque, and assuring Lady Sudbury that she looked “*charmante*,” while Madlle. Mélanie, her coadjutor, was agreeing with Lady Stepastray, that she looked “*jolie à ravir dans le petit bonnet de nymphe*,” now paused, and replacing her hands in her apron pockets, and peering round the dowager as though she had been scrutinizing the inmate of a den in the Zoological Gardens, never even condescended to ask her what she wanted. Lady Sudbury, though perfectly acquainted with her by sight, that is as *the mad old Lady De Clifford, who had quarrelled with the whole county*, now raised her “*lorgnette*,” and investigated her more minutely than Madame could possibly do with the naked eye. Meanwhile Lady Stepastray advanced toward Herbert with

“The gliding undulating motion
Which steps, but treads not,”

and having received his assurances that she was looking more beautiful than ever, she cast an inquiring glance towards his mother. Now, like all persons who from oddity, temper, conduct, or any other cause, knew nobody, the dowager was exceedingly tenacious about her son's not introducing her to every one he knew; and Lady Stepastray being just the person he could venture to introduce her to, he began, in a voice nearly as dulcet as her own,—

“My dear Lady Stepastray, as I understand you and my mother are both to appear in Snobguess's forthcoming work, will you allow me to make you personally known to each other?”

“I shall be most happy, my dear Mr. Grimstone.”

“My dear mamma,” whispered Herbert, “Lady Stepastray is so anxious to be introduced to you—may I introduce her? I think you've read her books, ‘The Old Road to Ruin,’ and ‘The Chamberlain's Daughter.’”

“Oh dear, yes, to be sure, and *vaustly* interesting they were.”

“Well, then, I may introduce her to you?”

“Certainly.”

“My mother, Lady De Clifford—Lady Stepastray.”

“I'm charmed to make your acquaintance, Lady De Clifford,” mewed Lady Stepastray; “for I'm such an admirer of your son's talents.”

“I’m sure, with regard to talent, nobody has greater *pretensions* than your ladyship,” grinned the dowager.

“No—no—my dear Lady De Clifford, you are very good to say so ; but I am cramped. My natural bent is theology and metaphysics ; but novels, you see, are the only things that go down now ; so I’m obliged to write them ‘*malgré moi*.’”

“And I’m sure no novels can go down (!) fauster than your ladyship’s ; but I’m detaining you from your purchases,” bobbed the dowager, as she moved away to the other end of the room, where disencumbering herself of Frump’s amateur bonnet, she desired Madame Girardot to produce some of her newest and most “*recherché*” head-dresses ; but whether it was that her ladyship’s French sounded to Madame’s Parisian ears like Hebrew, and that consequently she read it backwards, I know not ; but certain it is that she excavated some of the very dowdiest and dingiest of her last year’s hats and toques ; and having strongly recommended the ugliest of the batch, for which she modestly asked treble its original price,—she was listlessly proceeding to wrap it up in silver paper, when Lady Sudbury walked up to her, and said, in a languid and impertinent voice, sufficiently loud for the dowager to hear,—

“*Qui est ce personnage ?*”

Girardot, without raising her eyes from the parcel she was arranging, flung one glance round the corner at Lady De Clifford, as she replied, with a contemptuous curl of her lip,—

“*Ca ? ça ? n’a pas de nom !*”

“Devilish good,” thought Herbert, in his own mind ; but fearing his mother might not be of the same opinion, he looked at his watch, and said,—

“My dear mamma, I fear we shall not have time for Chalon’s to-day, for it is half-past four now ; we dine at five, and I must be down at the House by seven.”

“Oh, very well, my dear ; the best way will be for us to go straight home.” And bobbing across the room to Lady Stepastray, she took her son’s arm, who pressing her hand, as he helped her into the carriage, told her, “That he admired her taste exceedingly in the hat she had selected, as nothing could be more becoming.”

On arriving in Bruton Street, he inquired if his groom was there ; and being answered in the affirmative, he ordered his cabriolet to be at the door punctually at seven. Nothing of any moment occurred at dinner, except that the venison was too high ; at which her ladyship expressed her indignation, by turning sharply round to Croaker, and saying,—

“This *here* venison is perfectly uneatable ; the servants may have it !”

CHAPTER XXVII.

They lived together a long time in the greatest unity, *although they had married for love.*—*Fairy Tale of the Princess Lumineuse.*

The perception of a woman is quick as lightning. Her penetration is intuition, almost instinct. By a glance she will draw a deep and just conclusion: ask her how she formed it, and she cannot answer the question. A philosopher deduces inferences, and his inferences shall be right; but he gets to the head of the staircase, if I may so say, by slow degrees, mounting step by step. She arrives at the top of the staircase as well as he; but whether she flew there, is more than she knows herself. While she trusts her instinct, she is scarcely ever deceived; but she is generally lost when she begins to reason.—SHERLOCK.

Ich habe genossen das irdische glück,
Ich habe gelebt und geliebet.—WALLENSTEIN.

“YESTERDAY, by special license, at the residence of her father, in Berkeley Square, Fanny, youngest daughter of John Pierrepont Neville, Esq., of Bishop’s Court, Yorkshire, to Henry, eldest son of Henry Saville, Esq., of Latimers, Herefordshire. Immediately after the ceremony, the happy pair left town for Latimers. There were present on the occasion the Duke and Duchess of Darlington, the Marquis and Marchioness of Sudbury, Lady Florence Lindley, the Earl and Countess of Shuffleton, Viscount and Viscountess De Clifford, Viscountess Dowager De Clifford, Mr. and Mrs. Seymour, the Honourable Herbert Grimstone, and the Honourable George Pierrepont. The *déjeuné* was in Gunter’s best style, and the trousseau of the lovely bride was furnished by the joint efforts of Mesdames Minette and Victorine, of Paris.”

Such was the paragraph that greeted Cheveley’s eyes upon entering the breakfast-room at Cheveley, the morning after Saville’s marriage, from attending which he had excused himself on the plea of indisposition, for he was determined religiously to adhere to his promise to Julia, of not premeditatedly putting himself in her way; and though no one could rejoice more sincerely than he did in his friend’s happiness, yet he could hardly have borne to see him married to the sister of the only woman he had ever loved: and contrasted the difference of Lady De Clifford’s wretched fate with that of her more fortunate sister. His eyes were still rivetted upon the paragraph, or rather upon the words, “Viscountess De Clifford;” when a servant entered with a salver full of letters, two of which were from Saville and Fanny, the latter to thank him for a beautiful “*parure*” of brilliants and sapphires he had sent her as a bridal present. Cheveley tore this open first, hurrying over all the thanks, and even the hopes that she and Saville might see a great deal of one for whom they had so sincere a regard. His cheek burnt, and his breath was suspended, when he came to the end of the letter, for it contained the words—

“Dear Julia is not quite recovered from the effects of her illness ; she is going down to that gloomy horrid place, Grimstone, by herself. I hope Harry won’t feel his manly vanity outraged, but I really am not so selfish as to feel happy, when I think of the undeserved sufferings of one, for whom the best of human lots would not have been good enough. I told her I was going to write to you ; she desired her kind regards and best wishes. My little niece’s commission cannot be executed by proxy, as it consisted of kisses, which, as I told her, ‘She must contrive to give you herself some day or other.’ But the carriage is waiting to take us to Latimers, and Harry has just made his *début* in a very conjugally dictatorial ‘Come, Fanny.’ So, fearing it might grow by delay into ‘Come, madam !’ I must say good-bye ; but not before I have assured you,

“That I am, dear Lord Cheveley, your faithful and sincere friend,

“FANNY SAVILLE.”

“Oh, God! oh, God,” cried Cheveley, burying his face in his hands, “if I could in any way minister to her comfort, I would willingly sign a compact never to see her ; — but to know that she is ill, lonely, driven into a dreary solitude, by the petty tyranny of one who is not content with the most lawless liberty for himself, without oppressing her with the most inquisitorial persecution : it is too — too much ; and I feel all that the world envies, as wealth, station, power,—a mockery, when it cannot extend to her. Julia, my poor Julia—to think that the only being on the face of God’s earth, who would tear out his heart to serve you, is the only one who could not move hand or foot to do so without injuring you, is greater torture than sin could ever deserve, or time ever atone for.”

Cheveley sat so long pondering over Julia’s and his own adverse fortunes, that the butler thought something must have happened, and came to see if he might remove the breakfast things ; at which his master gathered up his letters, and throwing up the window, walked out upon the terrace, followed by Prince, who had exercised an especial guardianship over him of late ; for dogs are sensible people, and see when bipeds are not quite fit to be left to themselves.

As Cheveley walked mechanically on into the beautiful valley that lay at the foot of the gardens, he opened Saville’s letter. Nothing could be kinder, or more devoted than its whole tone ; and with that delicacy, which sympathy ever inspires, he entered into and soothed his friend’s feelings, without ever alluding to them ; one thing he hinted slightly, yet firmly, which was, the injury he would do to others as well as himself, by remaining shut up at Cheveley, and not mixing in society as usual. “Saville is right,” said he, putting the letter in his pocket, as he walked on with his hands behind him ; “but, like everything else that one ought to do, it is much more easily said than done.” As he made this reflection, he reached the last terrace ; the tinkling lulling sound of a fountain made him turn round ;—the design of this fountain was Hylas and the Nymphs, done in bronze ; but the water in the basin was so stagnant, that it was covered with unblown water-lilies. The

thought of these "fair white river-cups," carried him back to Julia and to Como ; and though it was a sharp March day in England, he actually fancied he inhaled the verbenum-scented air of Pliny's villa.

" Thus in each flower and simple bell,
That in our path untrodden lie,
Are sweet remembrances which tell
How fast their winged moments fly."

"I beg your pardon, my lord," said Mr. Marshall, emerging from behind the fountain, and taking off his hat, which Prince began busily investigating, "but I have spoken to one of the gardeners about cleansing this basin ; and I hope your lordship won't see it in this state by to-morrow."

"Upon no account let them touch it," said Cheveley ; "on the contrary, I am so fond of these lilies, that I wish them to be even artificially cultivated wherever there is water ; so have the goodness to attend to it, Marshall, will you ?"

"Very good, my lord, it shall be done," said Marshall, bowing a retreat, as Lord Cheveley descended the broad old stone steps, that led into the valley. One side of this valley was bounded by a hawthorn hedge : on the other side of which was a by-road, leading to Blichingly, and skirted by the arbutus-covered rocks seen from the valley ; and, among the crags of which were to be seen the ruins of the old abbey, before mentioned, as the occasional rendezvous of the gipsies, and their friends and patrons, the smugglers.

Cheveley had a vague recollection of having, as a child, climbed the opposite heights, and hid for hours among the ruins, to the no small consternation of the inmates of the castle ;—and now, not much caring where he went, provided he felt progressing, he even determined to let Prince lead the way, and to follow wherever he went. The dog, having effected a passage through the hedge, looked round for his master, but seeing that he was already in the road, he wagged his tail, and bounded swiftly on into the opposite dell. For a few moments Cheveley paused to admire the beauty of the surrounding scenery, ere he followed Prince up the little winding path by the Fairy's Bath, that led to the ruins. Upon gaining the summit, Prince stopped, as dogs will do, to botanize over a tuft of daisies ; and not satisfied with the intelligence his nose brought him, he kept scraping and rooting up the earth with his paws ; while his master walked on, till he came near the old abbey, when his attention was arrested by the sound of voices talking in a suppressed tone behind the aisle, but still loud enough for him to overhear the following dialogue.

"I think it will be the death of the old man, and that is my only fear," said a female voice.

“Nonsense. I tell you, Madge, it is the only way we can encompass the hunter in his own toils; and as for the old man, you know he only lives, and would die for revenge, and I honour him for it; and with heart, hand, ay, and blood, too, if needs must be, I will help him.”

“Yes; but,” persisted the first speaker, “see how he sinks already under disgrace, and the desertion of his neighbours, and but that—”

“But me no buts, girl,” interrupted the other voice; “I have never yet seen you in coward’s armour; so keep a stout heart still, and you’ll not only serve your friends, but, mayhap, be made a lady yourself beyond the seas sooner than you think for: but remember, a craven heart shall never be my wife.”

This last threat appeared omnipotent, for the reply was in a coaxing submissive voice.

“Well, well, Miles, you know best, and I would do anything to please you or serve them; so you’ll find that poor Madge will be a good girl, and true and silent as the grave. Good lack, this is a strange world; you and I, or at least I, would be scouted as an outcast, undeserving of credit or trust; and yet here is a great man, a gentleman, a nobleman, forsooth, nay, a lawgiver and protector of the people, can do that with impunity for which hanging would be too good were he one of us.”

“The world, Madge, is divided into mountains and valleys: the great people are those upon the mountains, and however wicked they themselves may be, they have a right, because they have the power, to cast stones at those in the valley, whose inferior position precludes both retaliation and redress. But what’s the matter with the dog? what is he whining and sniffing at? Wasp, lay down, sir.”

“Err-err-err, bow-wow-wow, err-err-wow.”

“So, ho, poor fellow: down, my man, down.”

“It’s only the child teasing him,” said the woman’s voice.

“Not it, he never minds the child; I hope there’s no one outside.”

“They could not hear if there was.”

“I’m not so sure of that.”

Cheveley, not gathering from what he had heard that any mischief was intended on the part of the two conspirators, but, on the contrary, that some was evidently to be prevented, walked quietly round to the entrance of the ruin; and to give those within fair notice of his vicinity, began whistling and calling loudly to his dog. Before he gained the porch, a man rushed out, and, slouching his hat over his eyes, hurried down the glen: at the same moment a little Scotch terrier trotted up to Prince, barking at him furiously. But while this modicum of dog’s-flesh kept advancing and retreat-

ing in quick succession, and wagging both tongue and tail with amazing velocity, his highness stood immoveably still, and allowed himself to be barked at with great dignity and endurance, taking no other notice of the attack, than by placing his black, cold, stately nose amicably close to the aggressor's ear, and ever and anon giving one or two slow wags of his tail.

"Wasp, Wasp, Wasp, come here, sir," said Madge Brindal, now emerging from the ruins, and leading Mary Lee's child. Cheveley started, evidently much struck by the picturesque dress and great beauty of the girl, whose brilliant complexion was rendered even richer at the moment, by the fresh air and bright sunlight that together played upon her cheek.

"Such a fine gentleman as you should have a fine fortune: let me tell it you," said Madge, coming laughingly up to him. "Blessings on your handsome face, may all your years be summers; but I'm sure before I look at your hand that your fate is spun with velvet and silk; do let me unravel it for you."

"Good heavens!" cried Cheveley, for the first time looking at the child, and perfectly staggered with its likeness to Lord De Clifford, "whose child is that?"

"Poor child," said Madge, her eyes flashing as she spoke, "he has Sin for his father, and Sorrow for his mother; but his father is a great man,—the popular member at Triverton."

"Lord"—

"De Clifford!" screamed Madge, as though she took delight in the impotent revenge of making the rocks echo with his name.

"Then it must have been since his marriage," said Cheveley, thinking aloud.

"You know him, then?" said Madge, looking eagerly in his face. Cheveley was buried in a train of thought, and made no answer.

"I hear," continued Madge, "that the wretch has a wife that is too good for him."

"Too good for him! too good for any man!" cried Cheveley, biting his lip, and completely thrown off his guard by the violence of his own feelings. This was enough for the quick penetration of Madge; at one moment she discovered the truth, for nothing seemed more natural in her mind, than that a man who never thought of his own wife, like Lord De Clifford, might find other men to do so for him; and having decided this point to her satisfaction, she determined upon availing herself of it, and acting accordingly.

"Well, well," said she, "it is waste of time to talk of such as him; so do, kind sir, let me tell you your fortune. I'll warrant, if it ever had any, that the gall is by this time taken out of it."

"By and by," replied Cheveley, smiling; "but first tell me the histy of this c hild."

“That will I,” said Madge, “I wish I could tell it to the whole world ; walk down the glen with me, and you shall hear it.”

He followed her till they reached the Fairy’s Bath, at the foot of the little winding path ; when Madge, having pointed to the park trees of Blichingly, that were visible in the distance, commenced poor Mary Lee’s story, and told it to him from beginning to end, acting so vividly the scene, on the night that Richard Brindal had found her a senseless idiot in that very place where they were then standing, that Cheveley shuddered.

“Monster !” exclaimed he, drawing his hand across his eyes, as if to shut out some hideous phantom. “I wish I could see those letters ?”

“And so you could,” replied Madge, “if you would come as far as poor Lee’s cottage, for I know where Mary keeps them, and I could get them and show them to you without her knowing a word about it ; not that she now minds any one seeing them : no—no, he has insulted and trampled on her too much to have left any other feelings in her but hatred and revenge ! but it’s too far for a grand gentleman like you to walk, and all across the fields too.”

“How far is it ?” asked Cheveley.

“Nearly three miles.”

“Not a bit too far, especially if they are so poor, I may be able to do something for them.”

“God bless you for that, sir ; but do let me tell you your fortune, for I should like to tell you all the good that I know is in store for you.”

“Well, then,” said Cheveley, smiling, as he put a sovereign into her hand, “be quick, and give me as much good fortune as this will purchase.”

Madge took his hand, and, examining it minutely, shook her head. “This is no common hand,” said she : “you have plenty to be happy with, but still you are not so, for there are wings to your heart, and it’s not with you—no, nor ever will be till all this has past away. There is blood, and death, and fear, and but little hope, but that little is shrouded in a widow’s hood.”

Madge perceived a slight tremulousness in the hand she held, and she added, “but this year binds your fate ; hush !” continued she, pointing upwards, and inclining her ear towards her hand, as though listening to some mysterious sounds, for Cheveley could hear none, “hush ! ay, the last sound has died away, all now is over, even when there are not *tears* there must be *time* for the dead, and, however slowly it may lag,” said Madge, suiting the action to the word, by drawing her hand slowly through the air, and then suddenly stopping, “it must stop at last, and then your sun will rise, and a brighter one never yet rose than it will be.”

The oracular voice and Pythian air, that Madge knew so well

how to assume, had, in spite of himself, an effect upon Cheveley, for a few minutes, beyond the power of reason and common sense to ridicule him out of. The skilfully vague way she had alluded to his fate, leaving fancy to interpret, and chance to confirm her predictions, either way, glided from his imagination into his heart; he knew it was a folly, but it was one that for worlds he would not have been disabused of, for love always dislikes the head wisdom that would reduce the heart to sanity, placing the strait-waistcoat of reason upon every feeling. There is not, perhaps, a more affecting proof of this extant, than an anecdote Kotzebue mentions, in his "Travels to Paris," of a girl who was in the habit of being accompanied on the harpsichord, by her lover, on the harp. The lover died, and his harp remained in her room. After the first paroxysm of despair, she sank into the deepest melancholy, and much time elapsed before she could bear the sound of music, but one day she mechanically struck a few chords on the harpsichord, when, lo! her lover's harp, in perfect unison, resounded to the echo. The girl was at first seized with an awful shuddering, but soon felt a kind of soothing melancholy; she thought the spirit of her lover was hovering near her, and sweeping the strings of the instrument. The harpsichord from this time constituted her only pleasure, as it afforded to her imagination the joyful certainty that her lover was ever near her:—till one day, one of those awfully wise men, who try to know, and insist upon clearing up and explaining everything, came into the room during one of these mysterious duets; the poor girl begged of him to be still, as at that moment, the dear harp was playing to her in its softest tones. Being informed of the happy illusion that overcame her reason, he laughed, and with a great display of learning and absence of feeling, proved to her by experimental physics, that all this was perfectly natural. From that moment the poor girl drooped, sank into a profound melancholy, and soon after died! (1)

What is life, but a series of illusions? for the most part miserable!—then, are they not the worst of murderers who would destroy the few happy ones that diversify it?

They walked on in silence nearly the whole of the way; while the two dogs, who had by this time entered into an honest friendship with each other, amused themselves by running races, and beating the hedges.

"And so these Lees are very poor?" said Cheveley.

"Very poor now, indeed, sir; few people had a better business than John Lee, before poor Mary's troubles, but since, he does not seem to exert himself to please people as he used; and the old lady up at the Park, God forgive her, for that and all her other

(1) This anecdote has furnished the subject of a tale by the heroic poet Korner, called "The Harp."

wickedness, since her son's villany, has tried to prevent people dealing with him; and as they are chiefly her tenants round Blichingly, they are obliged to do whatever she pleases, so that he has little now to do beyond the workhouse coffins; but Mary being better, poor thing, takes in plain work again, which helps them a little. Lee could have got a very good job, to repair the out-houses at Campfield, last week, but he had no money to buy timber, and so was obliged to give it up."

This narration brought them in sight of Lee's cottage; the garden was wild and desolate as usual, but opposite the door was a white birch, which Coleridge has immortalized as the

———"Most beautiful
Of forest trees, the Lady of the Woods."

Its leafless and shadowy branches were now waving to and fro, as the wind sighed through them, and although it was a bright sunny day in the woods and fields, there was a grey gloom round the nook in which Lee's cottage was situated, that harmonized with the neglected look of the once-blooming garden. Wasp having done the honours to Prince, by pushing open the gate with his paws, and flinging a look of invitation to him over his shoulder to follow,—Madge in her turn preceded Cheveley, and pioneered away the long entangled weeds on each side of the gravel walk that would have intercepted his passage.

"Stop," said he, as Madge laid her hand on the latch of the door, "My sudden appearance, without any ostensible reason, might distress the poor girl; so you can say I have come to bespeak some work from her father, which I intend to do; but, before I do so, I should like to see those letters you mention; you can make some excuse to call me into the garden, and show them to me there."

Madge nodded assent as she raised the latch, and put down the child, who ran to its mother.

"How he do grow, to be sure," said Mrs. Stokes, who was interrupted, by the child's arrival, in an eloquent lament over the depredations her poultry-yard had lately experienced; all of which, she unhesitatingly attributed to Richard Brindal's revenge, and her husband's inertness. Mary was sitting at work on one side of the fire-place, while her father, who had his iron-rimmed spectacles on his forehead, paused, from his occupation (which was that of fixing up a bracket at the other side of the chimney-piece) to listen to Mrs. Stokes's grievances.

"As I tell 'em," resumed Mrs. Stokes, speaking with even more energy and vitality than usual, "all these here worries 'll be the death of me, and who 'll manage the concern when I'm gone? and who 'll manage John Stokes, I should like to know? oh! it won't bear a thought!"

"Hush!" said Madge, placing her finger on her lip; and then turning to old Lee, she said aloud,—“See here, Mr. Lee, I’ve brought you a good gentleman, who wants you to do some work for him.

The old man bowed; Mary rose, and blushed. As she did so, which for the moment brought back all her former beauty, Mrs. Stokes fidgetted into the perpendicular, as she rubbed with her apron the chair she had just vacated, and presented it to Cheveley: during these ceremonies, Madge left the room to get the letters. “Sit down, pray,” said Cheveley, seating himself in the chair Mrs. Stokes had placed for him; “do n’t let me disturb you; I merely came about some work that I wanted done, which I will tell you of presently, if you will allow me to rest for a few minutes.”

“Certainly, sir,” said the old man; “is there anything I can offer you? all we have is but poor fare, but, such as it is, I should feel proud of your taking it.”

Any think the gentleman would like, I could soon step home and fetch it,” said Mrs. Stokes; “and,” continued she, rummaging in her pocket, and at length producing a card, which she presented to Cheveley, with many low curtseys, “At any time you should want posters, sir, we’ve the very best; and post two-pence a-mile cheaper than the Good Ooman; in short, we’ve hexcellent ’commodation of hevery kind; stabling, lock-hup coach-houses, beds, foreign wines, genuine spirits; and, though I say it, as should n’t say it, as good a larder as there is in England, no one never hears no complaints of the De Clifford’s Harms!”

Having thanked Lee, but declined his offer, Cheveley, as soon as Mrs. Stokes would allow him to speak, promised to patronize the De Clifford Arms, whenever he should need the hospitality of an inn.

“Thankee, sir, much obleged to you, I’m sure, but you’ll please to hobserve, sir, that hit’s the right hand side as you come hup from the post-office; for I can’t a-bear to see gentlefolks entrapped by the Good Ooman that has nothink fit to be seen. And if they arrive at dusk, its sometimes the case, when they do n’t *exsac*-ly know which side our house is hon.”

Much to Cheveley’s relief, Madge now returned.

“Now, sir,” said she: “if you please, I’ll show you the beehives I told you of.”

“I fear they are in such a state that they are not fit for the gentleman to see,” said Lee.

“Oh, they will do to explain what I mean,” replied Madge, hurrying into the garden, followed by Cheveley. “I think we had better turn down the lane, sir,” said she; “for we may be observed here.” As soon as they had reached the lane, she gave him Lord De Clifford’s letters in rotation, and watched his coun-

tenance narrowly as he read them. When he came to the one signed "William Dale," Cheveley's indignation rose to such a pitch, that he crushed the letter in his clenched hand, as he exclaimed, "Cold-blooded wretch! he would be capable of anything. Poor girl!"

"Oh, I do n't wonder at your being angry, sir," said Madge: "but here is more of it." And she placed the letter from Lord De Clifford to Stokes in his hand.

"And who is this Richard Brindal, that he says was to marry Mary Lee?" asked Cheveley.

"Why, my brother," said Madge, looking down; "and I fear that is the best which can be said for him."

"And she would not marry him, eh?"

"Marry him!—no, sir, she is too broken-hearted to marry any one; and if Dick had been an angel, instead of being the rough ungainly creature he is, she would scarcely have gratified that wicked lord so much, as to help on his plot against herself."

"Hardly, indeed," said Cheveley; "but look here;" and he put five pounds into her hand, as he returned the letters. "You seem a good girl, and anxious to serve your friend; to say nothing of having shown me these letters. If ever I can do any good, by acknowledging that I have seen them, you may depend upon it I shall not deny it."

Madge thanked him, and promised to be silent.

As they returned to the cottage, Cheveley was buried in thought. Bad as his opinion had always been of Lord De Clifford, reality had for once outstripped imagination; and if he had before pitied Julia for being married to such a man, he now actually shuddered at it; for what could not such total want of feeling, and want of principle combined, be capable of? He knew that persons of strong passions seldom have much feeling, and therefore he had never suspected him of any; but the facts that had just come to his knowledge painted him in blacker colours than his most vivid fancy could have done. It was the cold-blooded, business-like calculation of his villany that so revolted him, compared to which the sins of impulse become virtues, however deep their dye.

As they neared the cottage, the pale, blighted, but still beautiful, form of Mary Lee, the silver hair and care-worn look of her father, joined to the proud beauty and suppressed sorrow of Lady De Clifford, passed in Cheveley's imagination, and formed a group which made it well for him that Lord De Clifford was not near him at the moment. When he re-entered the cottage, he was glad to find that Mary had gone away; for to have seen her again would only have distressed him still more.

"If you will have the goodness," said he, to the old man, "to give me a pen and ink, and a bit of paper, I'll write down the ad-

dress where you are to call to-morrow; and as I understand your work is at a stand-still for want of timber, this may help to purchase some," added he, placing a fifty-pound note in Lee's hand.

"No, no, sir," said the old man, his eyes filling with tears, "I cannot take your money till I have earned it."

"I mean that you should earn more than this," said Cheveley, "so I must insist upon paying you in the way and at the time most convenient to myself."

With that good breeding which good feeling inspires even in the humblest, he made no farther objection, but, bowing, merely said,

"As you please, sir. May God bless you," and he placed the pen, ink, and paper, before Cheveley, who wrote—

"Marshall, employ the bearer about every carpenter's work that is wanted, till farther orders.

"March 22, 18—."

"CHEVELEY.

And, having placed it in the old man's hand, left the cottage, amid the blessings of Lee and Madge, and the reiterated curtsies of Mrs. Stokes. As soon as he was gone, the former put on his spectacles, to read the address of the place he was to go to the next day.

"I declare it is the young Marquis of Cheveley!" said the old man.

"The Marcus of Cheveley!" screamed Mrs. Stokes, "Lor! to think that I should have been so free with a marcus!" The bare idea was so overpowering, that Mrs. Stokes sank back in her chair: but she was not a woman long to be awed by any man; so soon rallying, she added, "but you all saw how haffable he was, and you heerd him promise to paternize the De Clifford Harms. Well, to be sure, a marcus! Who'd have thought it? I *am* surprised."

"I can't say that I am," said Madge, "except that he's not a prince, for he looks like one."

"And acts like one too," said Lee; "and this I owe to you, Madge; but you are always doing kind things by us."

"As you must thank some one, thank chances, or rather Providence," said Madge, "for I have nothing to do in the matter farther than being heartily glad of it."

"You are a good girl, Madge, and have a kind honest heart," cried the old man, placing his hand upon her shoulder, "and would that many who are called better were half so good."

"Amen!" laughed Madge.

"A marcus!" soliloquized Mrs. Stokes, as she pinned on her shawl. "Well, it's a pity some people do n't know when they have got a good wife: now, there's that great lazy oaf, John Stokes, I s'pose he'd walk from one hend of the world to the hother afore he'd fall hin with a marcus, and get him to promise his custom to the De Clifford Harms."

“Are you going straight home, Mrs. Stokes?” asked Madge.

“Let me see,” said Mrs. Stokes, abstractedly counting on her fingers; “turbot and lobster sauce, gravy soup; removed with haunch of venison, (can always get that from the park) chickens in white sauce, Scotch collops, *mentinang* cutlets; remove with jelly, blanc mange, charlotte of happle, and custards. The plated dishes—must send ’em to Lunnun to be cleaned, though; and Lord Cramwell’s claret. Yes, that’s the dinner for a *marcus*,” said Mrs. Stokes, triumphantly, as she concluded this imaginary culinary “chef d’œuvre.”

Madge reiterated her question.

“Eh—yes—no—why, my dear?” said Mrs. Stokes, gradually descending into the present from Lord Cheveley’s dinner, upstairs, in N° 22, at the Clifford Arms.

“Because I wanted you to take this little parcel, to go by the London coach.”

“Oh, well, that I’ll do,” said Mrs. Stokes, walking out of the cottage, with her head a great deal higher than when she had entered it. “So good-bye.”

“I wish, Madge,” said Lee, as soon as Mrs. Stokes was gone, “that you would leave a letter up at Cheveley Place for me this evening, for I shall feel quite oppressed till I have tried to thank his lordship for all his goodness.”

“I think you had better not,” said Madge, slightly colouring, “at least, I mean that you had better not send it by me; he might not like the idea of gipsies coming about his house, or he might think that I was encroaching upon his kindness of this morning; not that he would be likely to know it, but I feel that I ought to keep away, and—and—my going might prejudice the servants against you, and you know what great people they are in a great house.”

“Madge,” said the old man, pressing her hand, while a tear rolled down his withered cheek, “you ought to be a queen; you have more sense, judgment, and good feeling, than half the rest of the world put together.”

Cheveley, after leaving Lee’s cottage, wandered home so abstractedly,

“Chewing the cud of sweet and bitter thought,” that he was in his own grounds without being aware of it, till a servant met him, and told him that Mr. Spoonbill was in the library.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The night came on alone,
 The little stars sat one by one,
 Each on his golden throne;
 The evening air pass'd by my cheek,
 The leaves above were stirr'd,
 But the beating of my own heart
 Was all the sound I heard.—R. M. MILNES.

And why not death, rather than living torment?
 To die is to be banish'd from myself.

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

There are diversities of operations; but it is the same God which worketh all in all.—1 COR. xii. 6.

Two hours after the sound of the chariot wheels, that conveyed Fanny to Latimers, had died away, the carriage that was to take Lady De Clifford down to Grimstone came to the door. Lord De Clifford had engagements which took him out immediately after the wedding, and therefore prevented his being in the way to see his wife off, but Mr. Frederick Feedwell had kindly remained for that purpose. After having passed a week in telling Lord De Clifford that it was weak good-nature in him to allow Lady De Clifford to remain in town for her sister's marriage, he now spent the short time that intervened between Julia's departure, in shrugging his shoulders, and whispering her that really it was

“De-de-dreadfully tyrannical in De Clifford sending her down alone to that gloomy desolate place Grimstone, just at the beginning of the season too; and that though no one admired obedience in a wife more than he did, yet there were things that no wife ought to submit to, and it was qu-qu-quite evident to him that De Clifford was getting her out of the way for his own purposes; and though he did not pretend to be ve-ve-very moral, yet really such things were too bad in a married man—a married man, you know, Lady De Clifford!” and up went his two fingers.

Having turned in silent contempt from the serpent-like consolations of Mr. Frederick Feedwell, poor Julia had next to endure what was much more insupportable, the false and treacherous condolences of her mother-in-law.

“My dear madam, I feel quite sorry you are not going to remain the season in town; any one else might find it vastly dull at Grimstone just now; but with your mind, and the little gurl's company, I'm sure you never can be dull.”

“My brother thought, my dear Julia,” yawned out Mr. Herbert Grimstone, as he stood before a glass, arranging the few fractional hairs on each temple, under his hat, “my brother thought that, not being well, you would prefer being in the country. I'm sure

that anything he and I can ever do to promote your comfort in any way we shall be most happy."

"I'm sure, my dear, it does great credit to your head and *hort* to say so."

"Oh, I'm sure, my dear mamma, Julia will do me the justice to believe, that I have always studied her interests as much as if she had been my own sister."

But Julia leaving the room in utter disgust at the contemptible little animal's inane hollowness, the amiable mother and son soon took their departure, and left her to finish the preparations for her journey unmolestedly, save by the sighs and indignation of Berryl, who kept flinging the things about, as she vowed to Miss Grant (little Julia's new governess) that of all the wicked things Lord De Clifford and his mother had yet been guilty of, "this sending her dear lady away to that dreary, horrid place, at this time of the year, was the most wickedest." That she was sincere in this opinion no one can doubt, when it is remembered that ladies cannot be banished without their maids, and that two hours before Berryl had seen Luton and Gifford so happily forming part of the "cortège" of the bridal party; all of which formed a most tantalizing background, in her imagination, to the gloomy gable-ends of the Elizabethan pile at Grimstone, with its cold passages, bad neighbourhood, and worse roads, and its village church, which scarcely mustered a congregation of twenty, while the stone effigies of the Grimstones looked only less cold and rigid than their living descendants.

"But never mind; mark my words, ma'am," said Berryl to Miss Grant, as she locked the last imperial with a jerk, and, pushing it with her foot, called to two of the footmen to take it down stairs, and let her ladyship know that everything was ready; "Mark my words, ma'am, it will come home to them yet; for it is an impossibility such wickedness should go unpunished, especially with the old woman, who is at the bottom of it all."

"I think, Berryl," said Miss Grant, "you ought to try and appear cheerful and happy, for poor Lady De Clifford's sake; for it can but add to her low spirits, to see every one miserable and discontented about her."

"Oh, bless her!" replied Berryl, "she shall not see me discontented; but I cannot help saying, ma'am, what I think of those wretches,—for they are nothing else."

"Berryl, Berryl," cried little Julia, running in with Tiney in her arms, "mamma is waiting, and she says you are not to forget Tiney's basket; and do give me a silk handkerchief to tie round her poor little throat, for she is trembling with the cold."

"If she is so cold, miss, a velvet shawl will be better."

"So it will," said the child, delightedly, as she wrapped up the little animal, leaving nothing but its beautiful head and long ears

visible: "and how pretty she looks, with all this black velvet around her; does n't she, Miss Grant?"

"Yes, dear, very pretty," replied Miss Grant, patting the dog's head; "but your mamma is waiting, and we must go."

"I do love you," said Julia, following her down stairs, "for you never scold me, and tell me I am a fool, about the dog, as *Mademoiselle d'Antoville* used; and," continued the child, stopping on the landing-place, and standing on tip-toe, as she held up her little mouth to her governess, "I like to kiss you too; for you are so pretty, and so smooth, and so clean."

About three o'clock on the day after she left London, Lady De Clifford arrived at Grimstone. Dreary and desolate as she had always found it, it was now additionally so, for the house was undergoing repair, and was still full of workmen. The cold cheerless hall was a perfect chaos, with deal boards, shavings, carpenters' tools, and packing-cases, that had been forwarded from Italy. The uncarpeted stairs presented nothing but dirt and discomfort; and the grating of saws, and din of hammers, distracted one sense, while the dense smoke of green wood, that issued from the cold and long-unoccupied grates, overpowered another.

As soon as Julia had reached her bed-room, she was astonished to see the posts, tester, and foot-board, of an old, carved, black oak-bedstead, in which she was to sleep, still lying in disjointed fragments about the floor! The fact was, Lord De Clifford had too much on his mind, both amatory and political, to be able to think of such trifles as the comfort and well-being of his wife and child, and, therefore, had only written to Mrs. Jones, the housekeeper, two days before, announcing that Lady De Clifford was going to Grimstone: it was enough for him to know, that they were banished, and thereby that he had the world to himself, without being guilty of the puerility of caring how dreary the banishment might be. Immediately on the receipt of his letter, poor Mrs. Jones had fumed, fretted, ordered, scolded, scrubbed, swept, and, in short, done all that could be done in the time; and though great had been the labours of each and all, little was the apparent result from them.

"Dear mamma," said Julia, "come out of this nasty cold room; the smoke will make you cry as it does me."

Poor Lady De Clifford sank into a chair, and cried in good earnest. Berryl, who now arrived, laden with cloaks and packages, cast one look round the dreary dismantled room, and muttering, "Well, this is a little too bad," rang the bell violently. Mrs. Jones appeared, curtseying, and panting with her hand upon her side, quite out of breath, between agitation and getting up stairs. As soon as she could speak she also began to cry. "I assure you, my lady," sobbed she at last, "I never was so hurt in

my life, as to think that you should have to come to such a place, but I only got my lord's letter two days ago ; and work as we would, we could get no farther than you see, having no idea that the house would be wanted these four months, if then."

"I think, ma'am," said Berryl, ironically, "as you pretend to feel so much for her ladyship, you might at least have had her bed put up: where is she to sleep, pray?"

"Oh, do not say pretend, Mrs. Berryl, for I *do* feel for her ladyship, with all my heart; but it is not my fault about the bed either. Last week a very handsome bedstead, with crimson damask hangings, all beautifully trimmed with white satin, like a wedding bed, came down, and thinking of course it was for my lady, it was put up here; but last night, down came Mr. Tabouret, the upholsterer, in a great fright, and said, it was all a mistake, as it was for my lord's own room, in Grosvenor Street: so it was taken down and sent away at eight this morning, and they have not yet had time to put up the other."

"Trimmed with white satin! trimmed with white satin!" muttered Berryl, bridling up, and throwing every thing about within her reach, "I'll tell you what *hit* is, Mrs. Jones," continued she, walking up to her, and speaking in a low voice, with her teeth set, and her hands clenched, "I'd a tore it all to pieces with my hown ands when it ad the good luck to come in my way, before I'd a let him and his fye-fies a ad such a bed, while his poor dear wife is to be shut up in this dreary prison, without any bed at all it seems. Oh, shame! shame! I *wonder*, Mrs. Jones, where your feeling as a woman, as as been a wife, was, to let the filthy bed go back."

"Indeed, ma'am," sobbed Mrs. Jones, wiping her eyes with the corner of her apron, "had I suspected anything of the sort, I am sure I should have laid violent hands on it."

"Ah! some people never has the sense to suspect nothing, and that's what the men wants to bring us *hall* to; but they will find some of us too many for them yet."

"Berryl," called Lady De Clifford, coughing violently, "do get me some 'pâte de guimauve.'"

"If I might take such a liberty as to ask your ladyship to sit in the housekeeper's room," said Mrs. Jones advancing, "you would find it what no other part of the house is at present—clean, warm, comfortable, and quite free from smoke."

"Thank you, Jones; but that would be turning you out."

"Oh, never mind me, my lady—I can stay in the still-room, or the hall, or anywhere; but it would be something off my mind, if I could see you and Miss Julia, bless her! a little more comfortable."

"Do, mamma," said Julia; "for Jones used to have such nice cakes and sweetmeats in that room, and I dare say she has still."

Lady De Clifford smiled at the cogency of the child's reasoning ; and yielding to the combined entreaties of all present, she took Miss Grant's arm, and followed Mrs. Jones, who led the way to her own territories. Mrs. Jones did the honours of her apartment, by wheeling the sofa near the fire, and removing the bright brass kettle from the hob, also the hyacinths from the chimney-piece, which she feared would make Lady De Clifford's head ache ; while little Julia climbed on all the chairs to examine the pictorial beauties of the walls, which consisted of an engraving of the " Ecce Homo ;" Mr. Garrick in " Richard the Third ;" Mrs. Woffington as " Lady Townley," in the " Journey to London ;" " George the Third walking on the terrace at Windsor ;" a large sheep in a green field all to himself, worked in lamb's wool ; a print of Grimstone ; another of Blichingly ; a bunch of carnations tied with a true lover's knot, done in tent-stitch, surmounted by a coloured wood-cut of the Marquis of Granby, with a fierce tear going obliquely across his face, the whole enclosed in black wooden frames ; while on the mantel-piece, besides the displaced hyacinths, were a Jacob's ladder, in spun glass ; a cabriolet, containing a lady and gentleman, of the same brittle material ; and a fine coloured pipe-clay eight-inch statue of Napoleon. Between the two windows was a table covered with green baize, on which stood a satin-wood tea-chest, behind which a japan tea-tray formed a fine Rembrandt-toned back-ground. On the hearth-rug sat a cat, more respectable than stately, who, however, withdrew to the " bel retiro" of a chest of drawers, upon the entrée of Tiney and Zoë.

Miss Grant sent for a square piano out of the school-room, in the hope of making the time pass less heavily ; for she played beautifully, and sang with great feeling and expression. Little Julia took her work, and sat at her mother's feet, as she lay on the sofa ; and Miss Grant asked permission to read out the three last numbers of " Nicholas Nickleby," which soon made Lady De Clifford forget (as it has done many others) all her sorrows for a time. After dinner, Miss Grant had recourse to Strauss, and some beautiful things from the " Norma" and the " Lucia," till at length, pausing to think what she should play next, Lady De Clifford said—

" Do, Miss Grant, if I have not quite tired out even your good nature, sing me those beautiful words of Mr. Kennedy's, which you set to music."

" They are very beautiful, but very mournful ; and I think your ladyship would like a little Venetian air, that I have never yet sung to you, better."

" Oh, no—no—nothing Venetian," said Lady De Clifford, passing her hand over her eyes, " the other, pray ; for when I feel melancholy, I like mournful music."

Miss Grant had now no alternative but to comply, and accordingly sang the following beautiful words :—

“ Would that the hour you call’d me thine,
Deserted girl, had been our last !
Before the star had ceased to shine,
Whose influence then was o’er us cast.
Would that we had not linger’d here,
But in the stillness of that dream
Floated to some less troubled sphere,
Like rose-leaves down a summer stream.

“ Thy heart to loneliness and grief
Then had not been an early prey ;
Nor had I felt my fond belief
In life’s illusion fade away.
Oh, no ! I had not lived to mourn
The choice I in my madness made ;
Of toys by folly won and worn,
Which left for banish’d peace a shade.

“ The world—my uncomplaining love—
The world I wooed avenged thee well ;
The golden shower I prized above
Thy young affection, on me fell.
The hand of power, the voice of fame,
In later days have both been mine ;
But never have I felt the same
In heart as when you call’d me thine.”

The expression of indignant feeling Miss Grant threw into the last verse did ample justice to the beautiful words, and left the echo of her voice floating on the heart long after its sounds had ceased. The rest of the night passed wearily away, for it was past midnight before Lady De Clifford’s room and bed were ready. On taking up the newspapers the next morning, Julia had the pleasure of reading the following paragraphs, all “ en suite.”

“ Yesterday morning, Viscountess De Clifford left town for Grimstone, where it is her ladyship’s intention to remain during the rest of the season.”

“ Yesterday evening, Viscount De Clifford entertained a select party at dinner, at his residence in Grosvenor Street. Among the company present were, the Earl and Countess of Shuffleton, Lords Albert and Harry Dinely, Viscount St. Leger, Lady Charlotte Loory, Lady Stepastry, the Hon. Mrs. Dreadnought, the Hon. Mrs. Reynard Alley, the Hon. Herbert Grimstone, Mr. York Fonnoir, Mr. Snobguess, and Mr. Frederick Feedwell.”

“ The Dowager Lady De Clifford also had a ‘ soirée musicale,’ at her house in Bruton Street, yesterday evening, which was numerously and fashionably attended.”

“ It is currently reported in the highest circles, that a marriage is on the tapis between the young Marquis of Cheveley and the

beautiful Lady Fanny [Germaine, the accomplished niece of the Premier."

Now, though Julia had often tried to persuade herself that Cheveley ought to marry, nay, though she had gone still farther, and tried to persuade herself that she *wished* him to do so, and though she did not believe this report of his marriage with Lady Fanny Germaine, yet it had the power of making her additionally unhappy for the rest of the day. Alas! poor human nature; disguise it as we will, love makes a chameleon of the heart; since, under its influence, every passing breath gives a different hue to its feelings; it only requires a word, a look, a tone, to make it "couleur de rose," and half of either, to render it more drear and dark than a starless midnight. It is this atmospheric variability, if one may use the expression, that occasions the thousand little dissensions that spring from love itself; for, it is generally in the fondest moments, that hearts that love ask and expect sacrifices, and each feels chilled and disappointed that the other has not yielded to it:—"You should not have asked at such a time," pouts one; "Ah! *you* should not have refused," sighs the other, and both are equally disappointed, in the ovation that each thought should have been exclusively theirs.

Time rolled on, and except that passed with her child, whose sweet young nature daily promised all she could wish, it was weary in the extreme to Lady De Clifford, for there is nothing more difficult for the unhappy to get accustomed to, than a *forced* and cheerless solitude: to be alone *often*, is not only a relief, but a luxury; but to *be always* alone is next akin to madness. Except from Fanny, she seldom heard from any one; for her most professing friends were too happy, and too gay, and too busy to write; and when they did, their letters were either filled with their own triumphs, or with offensive and frivolous apologies for not having written before; which, in plain English, amounted to "I'll write to you when I have nothing better to do, and this is as much as you can, or ought to expect, now that you are no longer in the way to contribute to our amusement or well-being."

She was also somewhat amused and disgusted at hearing that ladies who called their husbands brutes, tore their pocket-handkerchiefs, and went into hysterics at the disappointment of a delay about a ball or an opera box, were much shocked at her for not *cheerfully* submitting to whatever species of banishment Lord De Clifford ordained for her; while other exemplary ladies, though engaged to be married to another before their husbands were cold in their graves, were equally shocked at her *want of feeling* in writing to them in unmeasured terms of grief at the loss of a faithful dog, who had been her unchanging friend and companion for years; and wrote her word she *must be mad* to think of intruding

her canine loss upon the orthodox affliction of black crape and muslin caps. This was too disgusting to be angry with, and she merely thought of the story of the rich Venetian lady, who, when her confessor came to condole with her for the loss of her husband, found her in high spirits playing piquet with an adventurer. He remonstrated upon the indelicacy of such a proceeding :

“ Ah padre mio,” said the lady, “ had you come a quarter of an hour sooner, you would have found me dissolved in tears ! but I staked my grief on the game with this young man, and, as you perceive, I ’ve lost it ! ”

Julia had still to learn, that she should not measure other hearts by her own ; for she would have done more to serve an utter stranger than her “ soi-disant ” best friends would do to secure her salvation : no wonder then that she was disappointed ; but disappointment, after the first bitterness is past, is a fine tonic, and gives an elasticity to the mind, that saves it from all future morbidity ; when once we reflect in the beautiful words of James Knox, that

“ The friends have all deserted us

We loved in days of yore,

Since stranded by the storms of fate

Upon misfortune’s shore.”

We begin to weigh those friends in the balance, and, if among the gay, the hollow, and the worldly, they are sure to be “ found wanting,” to lose such, then, is in fact, “ to gain a loss : ” — at first, we grieve over the worthless phantom ; but, oh ! the happiness as we look wistfully back again through the vista of years, to discover *some* dear “ old familiar faces,” with hearts *as familiar*, whose mild steady light of love made no display in the sunshine of prosperity, but returns to cheer, guide, and help us through the night of adversity ; and prove, that in *some instances*, the bread we have cast upon the waters does indeed return to us after many days. Would that I could dip this pen into my heart, and I should be eloquent in praise of one, whose kind gentle heart is now cold and still ; but the good *he did is not* “ interred with his bones ; ” for he has delegated it to one, as kind, as diligent, as generous, as delicate as himself ; but how poor are words for friendship such as theirs, or gratitude like mine. May the path they have smoothed for me on earth be remembered to them in heaven !

It was now May, beautiful balmy May, that always seems to me like the first love of the year, when the flowers begin to blush beneath the warmth of the sun’s gaze, and the bees murmur honeyed nothings in their leaves. Lady De Clifford had so portioned out her time, as to fill up every interstice of it : her child, her flowers, her visits to the poor, and long country walks, all filled up the day ; and even in the stillness of night, when thoughts, those noiseless and undeniable visitors, *will* intrude, she would get up,

write letters, or do anything to banish the remembrance of Cheveley. Then came Sunday—a Sunday in the country, when there is a holy calm in all around, as though Nature herself was hushed in prayer, and no sound steals on the ear, but the bells of the village church, proclaiming the sabbath through the quiet fields, and harmonizing the spirit to thankfulness and hope. How often she thought, as she walked to the lowly fane, and still more, when she heard the words of comfort and encouragement enforced and expounded by Mr. Osborne, the rector; that she *had*, or that she *would* conquer herself; that she would never rest till she had uprooted every sinful feeling! but still, thoughts, which are the shadows of feelings, would sometimes intrude in spite of herself!

She had been nearly three months in the country, and notwithstanding all her incessant struggles with, and occasional victories over, herself, she had never had courage to take the sacrament; she wished, hoped, feared, trembled, and deemed herself unworthy of it. Whether it was that Mr. Osborne had remarked her constant attendance and attention at church, and her non-attendance at the communion table, or that he merely gave the admonition, in the course of his duty, towards all his parishioners, she knew not, but certain it was that on the tenth Sunday after she had been at Grimstone, had he been sitting in Julia's heart he could not have replied to her thoughts, or refuted her doubts better. His text was from 2 Cor. v. 17—"If any man be in Christ he is a new creature."

In the course of his sermon he said (and Lady De Clifford *thought* he fixed his eyes upon her), "Let no one be discouraged from coming to Christ, because he finds not in himself that godly sorrow for sin, that ability to repent, and all those spiritual qualifications which he desires to have: we must first be in Christ before we are new creatures. We would fain have something before we come; we are prone to conclude that God's pardons are not free, but that we must bring something with us wherewith to purchase them; but no, the proclamation runs thus—'Buy, without money,' 'Come, and take the water of life freely.' Therefore do not say, 'I have a sinful disposition, and a hard heart, and cannot mourn for sin as I should; I will therefore stay till I am better.' This is as though I should say, 'I will go to the physician, but I will have my malady healed first.' The end of going to Christ is, that this very hardness of thy heart may be taken away; that this very deadness of spirit may be removed; that thou mayest be enlivened, quickened, healed: that thou mayest hate sin, and become fruitful in righteousness, before thy soul be united to Christ by a living faith. For it is faith that purifies the heart, and works (produces good works) by love. We must not pretend to serve God by only going to church, and doing other acts of out-

ward devotion; while we are dead and cold our religion is vain. They who, like Mary, seek grace from the words of Christ, receive the assurance of divine approbation; and this stimulates them to fresh acts of piety and beneficence. It is almost impossible for such to go on in haughtiness, envy, hatred, and disobedience. Grace and faith will resist it, and make them lowly, gentle, willing, obedient, active, without relying on any works of their own. Whosoever withdraws his heart and senses from the bustle and noise of this world, looking for salvation through the blood and righteousness of Christ, will certainly find there, that ‘better part, which shall not be taken from him.’”

That day Julia remained for the sacrament. She returned home, feeling happier than she had done for some time; she had cast her burden upon him who could alone bear it; she had sought God, and found him, and peace was once more in her heart. It has been truly and beautifully remarked by some one, that “moderation is the silken string running through the pearl chain of all virtue.” Lady De Clifford felt this, and made no violent resolves; but a calm determination never to think of Italy, or anything connected with it, seemed to diffuse itself over her mind. On her return home, little Julia ran into her dressing-room.

“Dear mamma,” said she, kissing her, “how well you look—like what you used to look.”

“E vero—vero,” chirped the starling, that Cheveley had given her; the sound of the bird’s voice, for a moment, sent the blood from her heart to her cheek; but making a great effort, she turned to Berryl, who was taking off her things, and said,

“Take the bird down to Jones’s room, Berryl, will you, for it disturbs me.”

“Poor Pipola,” cried little Julia, “do let me have him in the school-room, mamma?”

“No love,” replied Lady De Clifford, “he would disturb you at your lessons;” and she blushed as she made the objection, for she felt it was a subterfuge; but being so often there herself, the poor little starling would as much remind her of all she wished to forget, as if he had remained where he then was. Berryl took the bird: his mistress gave one last look at him as he left the room, and if, for a moment, tears gathered in her eyes, they only served to commemorate the first signal victory she had gained over herself.

From that day Lady De Clifford pursued “the even tenour of her way,” and gradually began to regain the peace she had been so long a stranger to; her chief solace was in the instructive society of Mr. Osborne, and his kind-hearted wife. She received few letters, except from Fanny and her husband, and they breathed the very spirit of affection and friendship; in his last, Saville had

mentioned that Mr. Herbert Grimstone had been appointed to a northern embassy, and had taken his departure the preceding week. The only drawback to the quiet enjoyment of her present mode of life, was the occasional long country visits she had to pay over bad cross roads, with miserable post-horses. All newspapers she had eschewed, for they were sure to contain something to annoy her, one way or the other, and she had made a resolution that she would not be annoyed. She was sitting one evening on the lawn, looking at little Julia and Zoë running races, when she saw Mr. Osborne walking up the broad gravel walk of the "pleasure-saunce." She rose to meet him.

"Good evening, Mr. Osborne, what a lovely day this has been! I hope you are come to stay, and that you will allow me to send down to the rectory for Mrs. Osborne."

"Thank your ladyship, not this evening," replied Mr. Osborne, "for I have to go and see a poor man who lies dangerously ill five miles off; but as you say you never look at a newspaper, I could not resist bringing you this, and begging you to read the ablest and most eloquent speech, without exception, that I have read a long time; it has made a tremendous sensation in London, and, politically speaking, has nearly annihilated Lord Melford."

"I have no great love for politics," said Julia, smiling, "but to please you I really think I could read a whole debate. What is it about?"

"Lord Denham and the colonies," replied Mr. Osborne, looking down the columns of the paper. "Ah, here it is. 'The Marquis of Cheveley rose in reply.'"

Luckily a garden seat was near, into which Julia sank, for at Cheveley's name, coupled with such unqualified approbation, the blood seemed to eddy in a whirlpool round her heart, and a sudden faintness came over her.

"Dear Lady De Clifford, you are ill!" said Mr. Osborne, anxiously.

"No, no, only a slight spasm, it will be over in a minute."

"I fear the grass may be damp, as the dew is falling; you had better not stay out."

"Oh, I am better now," said Lady De Clifford, rising. "Which gate did you come in at? a walk will do me good. I'll go as far as the lodge with you."

"I came by the lake, and left my horse at the other side of the ferry."

"Very well, then, we'll go across the park; that will be the shortest way," replied Lady De Clifford, taking Mr. Osborne's proffered arm.

During the walk, Mr. Osborne could talk of nothing but Cheveley's speech in reply to Lord Melford; and his praises were too

sweet to Julia's ear for her to interrupt him. Nor was it till some time after she found herself alone, that she was sufficiently composed to read it herself; while her heart responded in audible echoes to the "cheers," with which it was so thickly interlined. Oh! what triumph has earth for us like the fame of those we love? Julia felt an indescribable pleasure in repeating over and over again every word Cheveley had uttered, and reiterating the plaudits he had received; in imagination, she heard every varied inflection of his deep, eloquent, and beautifully-modulated voice;—what wonder, then, if she lingered

"By the lake with trembling stars inlaid, till earth was still,
And midnight's melancholy pomp was on the distant hill. (1)

CHAPTER XXIX.

To be a beggar, it will cost the richest candidate every groat he has; so before one can commence a true critic, it will cost a man all the good qualities of his mind, which, perhaps for a less purchase, would be thought but an indifferent bargain.—SWIFT.

My brain, methinks, is like an hour-glass,
Wherein my imaginations run like sands,
Filling up time; but then are turn'd and turn'd,
So that I know not what to stay upon,
And less to put in art.—BEN JONSON.

His low and charmed voice made the still air so sweet,
That bees might leave Hybla to seek honey there.

UNPUBLISHED PLAY.

CHEVELEY had taken Saville's advice, and had forsaken the prison of Solitude to work on the treadmill of Society. And, oh! the weary toil it was to him. "But another year," he thought, "and there will be no necessity for this sacrifice;—and for her dear sake what would I not do?" The very homage he received in the world disgusted him; for he knew that it was not for himself, but his position; and that had he been the most stupid or the most wicked of God's creatures, he would have been equally popular, and equally caressed. The Savilles were still at Latimers, so that he felt every day more and more the desolation of the crowds in which he mingled,—for companionship he had none.

Lord Melford had again made fruitless overtures to him, the result of which was a total cessation of all private intercourse between them. And, though gifted with no ordinary powers of eloquence, Cheveley had no ambition to be an orator; but he felt that he had no right to form part of the legislature of his country,

(1) I know not who may be the author of these two beautiful lines, but I found them in Doctor Weatherhead's very clever and agreeable *Pedestrian Tour through France and Italy*. Simpkin and Marshall. 1834.

without defending her interests by exposing political profligacy, whenever its nature or extent forced him so to do; and, roused both by justice and indignation, at the flimsy equivocations and true Whig chicaneries by which Lord Melford had attempted to deny and defend some of his most undeniable and indefensible measures, he had made the able and magnificent speech at the beginning of the session, which Mr. Osborne alluded to in the last chapter. If the congratulations of friends, the extorted praise even of opponents, and the universal celebrity it insured him, could have made him happy, Cheveley ought to have been so; but when the mind is swayed by one master passion, what mere bubbles, formed and dissolved by a breath, are the greatest triumphs that do not relate to it! If he did feel anything like gratification at the sensation his speech had made, it was only when he thought that Julia would read it, and approve of the principles which dictated it, and the manner in which he had advocated them; he also felt a secret but natural satisfaction at the blow he had struck at the party of which the man he despised most on earth, Lord De Clifford, formed one of the tools and supporters. With him personally he had no intercourse whatever; but it provoked him to see a man, by dint of party spirit and puffery, maintain his footing in the world, whom, if his real character were known, the least fastidious would have shunned. Plato does not deserve all the credit he has got for saying to Speusippus, when his servant had been guilty of a great fault, "Do you beat that fellow; for I am angry with him, and shall go farther than becomes me:" for when others avenge us, we are doubly avenged; it is the having *none* to do it for us, that makes us use our own hot anger, and "go farther than becomes us."

It was this conviction that kept Cheveley out of Lord De Clifford's way; for he felt he could not trust himself with him. That he should hate his wife, was no longer a mystery to him; for, as Seneca truly observes, "'Tis a damned humour in great men, that whom they wrong they'll hate;"—especially should wives (as they are foolishly apt to do, when they writhe under them) venture to complain of their vices; for then they reward their interference like that of Praxaspes, and convince them, after a King Cambyses' fashion, that a continuance of their excesses only enables them to pierce the heart, and destroy life with a more unerring aim.

Oh! what an odious monster is an unprincipled press-gang—writing, telling, and propagating lies, from morning till night. Smiling in the face, and stabbing in the back! Of all reptiles, scribbling underlings are the vilest; who from parasitical maggots, gloating on the meats of the rich man's table, turn into literary panders to the rich man's vices, whether printed or acted; who spit their anonymous venom with impunity at the weak or the injured; and while, serpent-like, they entangle their victim in their

slimy coils, feel safe themselves from attack, from the conviction, that none care to encounter the pestilence of their breath. Cheveley felt this, not indeed in his own person, for he was rich, and great, and consequently beyond either their malice, or their meanness, their falsehood, or their fawning; but like all generous natures he could resent, and feel indignant at, injuries that were not his own; and was often roused, at seeing others suffer under

“The oppressor’s wrong, the proud man’s contumely,

* * * * *

The insolence of office, and the spurns

That patient merit of the unworthy takes.”

He had lately been much disgusted at a series of snake-in-the-grass critiques upon Charles Kean, that had appeared in the Investigator; and an anonymous back-stabber, that disgraced a new periodical, another vehicle of the Fuzboz and Fonnoir clique, of which Fuzboz was the writer. But Cheveley’s surprise would have ceased, had he known, what others knew, viz., that Fuzboz had formerly been under many obligations to Charles Kean; and it was an approved and successfully-practised custom among the great men with whom Fuzboz was now accustomed to live, and for whom he had the honour to do dirty work, to blot out all obligations with injuries, unless those of money, and dinners figuring in the *present tense*.

Cheveley had come to town, for a ball at D— House; but not knowing how to get rid of the intervening time, he had asked Mr. Spoonbill to dinner, who proposed their going to the play.

“With all my heart,” said Cheveley; and as he had no fancy for hearing all Shakspeare clipped into two words, he decided upon going to Drury-lane, and seeing what he had long wished to see, Kean’s Hamlet.

The house was crowded, and his box being the third from the stage in the first tier, he had a good opportunity of watching the thousand variations of the young actor’s beautiful and expressive countenance. Except perhaps his father’s, never were such eyes seen in a human head; every look was a creation stereotyped in light, caught from the Promethean spark within; there was indeed

“The mind, the music, breathing from the face,”

and echoed by a voice, that was the very poetry of sound: while the grace of each movement played round him, like the radius of an immortal halo: never to his feeling had Cheveley heard Shakspeare declaimed before. As the play advanced, it became a query in his mind, how nature had worked out her designs; whether she had made the poet for the actor, or the actor for the poet; so co-equal was the genius before him, that embodied, with the immortal genius that had conceived the subtle workings of the

“noble mind” that was there o’erthrown. No actor perhaps ever before so intimately combined the “*os magna soniturum* ;” which is the corporeal part, with that deep *pathos*, that is the very soul and essence of tragedy. The scene at the play, where Hamlet, lying at Ophelia’s feet, watches the king’s countenance, was almost supernatural; the envenomed words of the player seemed to act as conductors to the lightning of Hamlet’s looks, and actually to blast his uncle’s heart. Another masterpiece was the closet scene with Gertrude. The tone of reproachful sorrow, in which he uttered the words

“Mother, *you* have much offended my father,”

seemed, “*jure divino*,” to annul the ties of nature between them, and wring her heart with the same sadness as his own. Evening after evening, did Cheveley continue to enjoy the high intellectual pleasure of Kean’s acting, till he became puzzled which character to fix on as his “*chef d’œuvre*.” So excellent were all, that each seemed in its turn best; but after seeing him again and again, he gave the preference to *Hamlet* and *Lear*; for though he had often seen a drivelling old fool totter over the stage, that the play-bills called *Lear*, he had never before seen Shakspeare’s *Lear* personated; every one that had hitherto attempted it seemed to forget that there is a pith and marrow in curses; a stamina in undressed wrongs; an Herculean thew and sinew in hatred, that no time can wither into age: as *Lear* himself says,

——“When the mind’s free,
The body’s delicate: the tempest in my mind
Doth from my senses take all feeling else.”

Kean’s *Lear* is throughout “every inch a king,” never a driveller; and, when his provocations are considered, scarcely a madman. So fierce, foul, and unnatural, is the conduct of his daughters, that horrible as their father’s curse is, yet it is so well earned, that every word seems to fall but as the blows of even-handed justice. In the hands of an unskilful actor this curse becomes revolting, and, therefore, seeming unnatural, places *Lear* on a level with his daughters; but as Kean gives it, all our sympathies remain with *Lear*, and in the midst of the awful and supernatural images raised by his fearful imprecations, we still behold the

“Old kind father, whose frank heart gave *all* ;”
and feel with him, that

——“that way madness lies.”

In the last act, where he is dying, and says,

“And my poor fool is hang’d! No, no, no life;
Why should a dog, a horse, a rat have life,
And thou no breath at all? O, thou wilt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never!”

his acting is, without exception, the finest thing that ever was seen;

his heart literally appears to break, and it is some minutes before even the fall of the disenchanting green curtain can convince us that all we have seen and heard is not real.

“And this,” said Cheveley, as Hamlet died, “is the man that such a reptile as Fuzboz dares to criticise—nay, more, attempts to decry: but Seneca is right, we should never have heard of Sophroniscus but for the son of Socrates; nor of Aristo and Gryllus if it had not been for Xenophon and Plato; and, I suppose, the same age that can produce a Kean, must of necessity, by some inscrutable law of nature, balance the marvel with a Fuzboz!”

“No doubt,” replied Mr. Spoonbill; “for so it has been in all ages; and, what is worse, many of the master-spirits of this earth, have only obtained ‘post obits’ on posterity, and starved themselves, while they made all succeeding generations rich with their posthumous fame. Look to the chronicles of our own country for instance—old Baker, in Elizabeth’s reign, gives us an inventory of *illustrious* personages, long since forgotten, and now unknown, and winds up as follows:—‘It might be thought ridiculous to speak of stage-players, but seeing excellency in the meanest things deserves remembering, and Roscius, the comedian, is recorded in history with such commendation, it may be allowed us to do the like with some of our nation. Richard Burbidge, and Edward Alleyn, two such actors *as no age must ever look to see the like*; and to make their comedies complete, Richard Tarlton, who for the part called the clown’s part, never had his match, never will have. For writers of plays, and such as had been players themselves, *William Shakspeare and Benjamin Jonson*, have especially left their names recommended to posterity!’ Now, when there could by any possibility be a period when Shakspeare only served to cap a clown! we cannot so much wonder that there might be another, wherein a Fuzboz would dare to criticise a Kean.”

“Very true,” said Cheveley, “for the Erostratus breed is by no means extinct; and those who can do nothing great themselves are ever anxious to secure fame’s bastard, *notoriety*, by destroying the great achievements of others. How I should like to know Charles Kean; I admire all I have heard of his private character so much; and after all, that is the *real* portion of a man, which we should either value or despise: for genius, without the rudder of principle; or talents, without the ballast of moral qualities, serve but to lure others to the same destruction that awaits their possessor.”

“You would be fortunate if all your wishes could be so readily accomplished,” said Mr. Spoonbill, “for I made his acquaintance last year, and a more agreeable gentlemanlike fellow I do n’t know anywhere; I’ll introduce you to him now, if you like, if you will come with me to his room.”

“Thank you, I should like it of all things,” said Cheveley, rising to follow Mr. Spoonbill out of the box.

Upon entering Kean’s dressing-room, they found him still in Hamlet’s dress;—the presentation over, they entered into conversation; and Cheveley found him to the full as agreeable as Mr. Spoonbill had represented; he expressed his unqualified admiration of his Hamlet, not indeed to the full extent of what he felt; for, on the same principle that prevents a man seriously and deeply in love paying compliments, it is utterly impossible to say *all* we think *to* a person for whom we have a genuine and enthusiastic admiration.

In the course of conversation, Mr. Spoonbill alluded to the Fonnoir clique, and was not sparing of contemptuous epithets on Fuzboz.

“I must say,” said Kean, smiling, “his poor malice, with regard to myself, reminds me of a new reading a man playing in a barn once gave to the end of Hamlet’s soliloquy after the players leave him, where instead of saying, as it is written,

‘As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me, to damn me,’

he thundered out—

‘As he is very potent with such spirits
He abuses *me too, dam’me.*’”

“Ha! ha! ha!” laughed Mr. Spoonbill, “don’t say another word, for if you begin your good stories I shall stay here all night, and old Lady Dullgabble bespoke me a week ago to escort her to D——House; and as I saw her here this evening, I must now go, and either hear you abused, or made odious by comparisons with John Kemble. So, my lord,” added he, turning to Cheveley, “I’ll leave you and my inclinations with my young friend here together.”

Cheveley at the moment was busy looking at the picture of Kean’s father, which his son always wore when he played Hamlet, and it was not till Mr. Spoonbill had closed the door after him, that he felt as if he was intruding upon his new acquaintance; therefore, after having obtained a promise that he would dine with him the next day, he took his leave, possessing the rare satisfaction of retaining his veneration for the genius, wholly unimpaired by his personal intercourse with the man.

When Cheveley got into his cabriolet, he drove rapidly on, as men are wont to do when their thoughts are going a great pace. He tried to confine them to Kean, to Hamlet, but everything that was good, or beautiful, or fine, never failed to remind him of Julia; he thought how she would have enjoyed the acting he had seen that night; and then he thought of the lonely desolate life she was leading. Here the noble animal he was driving felt an addi-

tional lash of the whip, and thus urged to the top of its speed, dashed furiously on, till coming in sudden and violent contact with the pole of an omnibus, the horse reared, the shafts of the cabriolet broke, and Cheveley only escaped being dashed to pieces, by jumping out on the pavement at the top of the Haymarket.

A crowd, as is usual on such occasions, having instantly gathered round the place of the accident, the horse's head was soon secured, and the groom enabled to extricate him from the broken shafts, which as soon as he had done, Cheveley ordered him to take the cab to Adams's and the horse home, and send the carriage as soon as possible for him to the Carlton, whither he would walk. Accordingly, emerging from the crowd, he retraced his way down the Haymarket without further impediment, till he came to the Little Theatre, where there was an immense crowd, the play being just over. He was in the act of crossing to the other side of the street, when his attention was arrested by the cry of "Lady De Clifford's carriage," and the answer, "Lady De Clifford's carriage stops the way." Was it—could it be that Julia was in town?

At he asked himself this question, his heart beat so violently that he almost reeled again, and might have fallen, had he not, in rushing back to the porch of the theatre, leant against a pillar. He had scarcely drawn his hat over his eyes, before the words "Lady De Clifford coming out" fell upon his ear: suddenly his heart stopped beating, his breath was suspended, and he seemed actually to hear as well as see with his eyes, as he rivetted them on the door of the theatre; presently two figures appeared, which the light fell full upon: they were Lord De Clifford and his—mother. The former handed the latter into her carriage, and Cheveley sank back against the pillar, as disappointed and angry as if any one had deceived him, besides his own hopes. When the carriage drove off, Lord De Clifford, in returning into the theatre, jostled against Cheveley, and trod upon his foot, whereupon, instead of apologising, he said, savagely,

"D—n you, why don't you stand out of the way?"

"Because I have as good a right to the way as you, my lord," replied Cheveley, haughtily.

"You know me, then?" drawled Lord De Clifford, who had evidently taken too much wine.

"But too well," was the laconic reply.

"What the d—l do you mean by that, sir?"

"I mean what I say."

"Then," retorted Lord De Clifford, vehemently, "I'll make you eat your words, and may they choke you, as you swallow them!" so saying, he raised his arm, but Cheveley calmly, but resolutely, seized it, and pressing it back towards its owner's breast, walked under a lamp, as he replied,

“And you know *me*, too, my lord, so beware of what you are doing.”

“Le-Le-Lord Cheveley !” stammered Lord De Clifford, starting back a few paces, and then added, in an ironical tone, “the Triton of the Tories—the denouncer of democrats—the Demosthenes of dandies,—most true, I know you ; but allow me the honour of renewing my acquaintance with you at Wimbledon to-morrow ; a little cold lead will prevent my thinking as lightly of you for the future as I do at present.”

“Whatever your thoughts of me, or your designs on me, may be, you shall not betray me into a street brawl, especially as I perceive your potations have been as liberal as your politics, my lord.”

“Ye-ye—you shall repent this ; you shall hear farther from me, my lord marquis,” muttered Lord De Clifford, closing his teeth, and clenching his hand.”

“As you please, my lord,” said Cheveley, walking away from him, and turning into Pall Mall.

And what were Cheveley's feelings as he hurried along ? His first impulses were human, and consequently bad : for a few seconds his heart was a chaos of hope, triumph, ecstasy ; here was the man he hated most on earth—who stood between him and all he loved, who caused all the misery of one whose happiness was dearer to him than his own—thrown, by a sudden quirk of fortune, and that none of his own seeking either, completely into his power ; he knew himself to be an unerring shot. *To-morrow*, that little feather from the wing of time, which had now nearly dropped, might blot him from creation, and leave Julia *free*. But duelling he had always been sufficiently narrow-minded to consider as much murder as stabbing or poisoning, and would Julia link herself to a *murderer*—the murderer of her *husband* ? Ay, still her *husband* in name and in bond, if in nought else. But then *he* was no David, sending Uriah into the field to be slain ; the quarrel was none of *his* seeking ; nay, more, it had been thrust upon him ; the laws of society demanded that he should take it up. So far sophistry, but what did the laws of God demand ? that he should “*do no murder*,” and Cheveley's *honour* being derived from those laws, however fierce the struggle might be within, he generally ended by obeying them. When he reached the Carlton, he threw himself into a chair, exhausted by the conflict that he had undergone with himself ; but having once resolved upon the line of conduct he should pursue, he became calm, and when the carriage came, returned home to make some slight alteration in his dress, and proceeded, as he had originally intended, to D—— House. In the cloak-room he was intercepted by Lady Stepastray, who mewed up to him with—

“ My dear Lord Cheveley, do n't you think that picture,” pointing to one opposite where they stood, “ has a great look of Lady De Clifford ? ”

“ Good heavens, no ! as unlike as I to Hercules,” said Cheveley.

“ What a pity it is she and her husband cannot live together,” purred Lady Stepastray.

“ And why can they not, pray ? ” asked Cheveley, bitterly.

“ Oh, poor man, he says she has such a horrible temper, and is so dreadfully extravagant.”

Cheveley bit his lip nearly through, but, being determined to hear all the little demirep before him had to say, made no reply.

“ And besides,” continued Lady Stepastray, “ he says she is so insulting to his mother, too ; now that is very bad, you know, especially when the old lady has been so kind to her ; for Lord De Clifford himself told me, that his mother had gone on her knees to him not to marry Julia Neville, and yet, after, all the *very next day* she received her as a daughter, in the most affectionate manner. Now, so ungrateful of her, you know, my dear Lord Cheveley, to behave ill to her after this,” moralized Lady Stepastray, crossing her hands, and looking up in his face.

Cheveley could stand this no longer, but replied indignantly,

“ I always knew Lord De Clifford to be an unprincipled cold-blooded profligate ; but I never before knew he was so barefaced a one as to utter such despicable falsehoods against an innocent and exemplary wife, whom he and his vile old mother have left nothing undone to injure, persecute, and insult.”

“ No, no, my dear Lord Cheveley, I really do n't think so, for Mr. Fonnoir and Fuzboz, and other men who live a great deal with him, now really a *great deal*—dining with him three or four times a-week, say, it's *entirely* Lady De Clifford's fault, and I think *he's* such a *very* superior person ; did you see a review he wrote upon my book in the Investigator ? now, it showed such a fine mind ; yes, yes, depend upon it, my dear Marquis, Lady De Clifford is to blame ; *he* should have married a woman of superior mind, who could have appreciated him,” concluded Lady Stepastray, looking tenderly in her own face, as reflected by the mirror near which they were standing. At this juncture, Cheveley espied Mr. Spoonbill towing Lady Dullgabble up stairs, and breaking from Lady Stepastray in disgust, joined them, leaving her Arcadian ladyship alone with Lord De Clifford's cowardly falsehoods, that she had uttered at second-hand. Lady Dullgabble had an ample face, into which her nose modestly retired ; a figure like a carriage-bed rolled up for travelling, and arms like young bolsters ; her voice was deep-toned like a watch-dog's, and she boomed out her words slowly and jupiterically (here's a new word ! and if people do n't understand it, I can't help it) : she had

also a graceful fashion of holding up one side of her gown, no doubt to show that her ankles were legitimate branches of the same family as her arms.

“How did you like Kean’s Hamlet?” asked Cheveley, when they had waded through the two first rooms, as far as the door of the ball-room.

“Why, I must confess, even better than my friend John Philip Kemble’s, though hitherto I have considered no one could act Hamlet after him,” *tonansed* Lady Dullgabble.

“From all I have heard of him, I should have thought that he’d have been too cold and too measured for Hamlet, said Cheveley.

“Yes, true, he certainly was too cold and too measured for Hamlet,” interposed Mr. Spoonbill, “but the fact is, I never saw Hamlet before I saw Charles Kean’s, though I have seen the play a hundred times. But you must see him in his Macbeth; his Macbeth is splendid; I do n’t like his Othello *quite* as well as his father’s.”

“Macbeth can’t be acted now that Mrs. Siddons is gone,” said Lady Dullgabble, shaking her head; “and there is an error in Kean’s Macbeth: he says, ‘*Is this a dagger that I see?*’ too quickly. John Kemble used to say it *very slowly*.”

“Then, with all due deference to your better judgment,” bowed Cheveley, “I think John Kemble was wrong, and Charles Kean is right; for all excitement, and *nearly* all passions, especially those of fear and horror, are quick and sudden, and not slow and measured.”

Here the Duke of D. came up, and, with his wonted amiability and good breeding, left “metal more attractive,” to speak with and listen to Lady Dullgabble’s prosings. Having shaken hands with him, Cheveley sauntered through the rooms, and could not help thinking, as he looked at *some* of the ladies present, that it might be truly said of them, as the Spanish sage said of Alexander the Great, that their “*virtue was nothing more than a successful temerity*.”

Next to the happiness of seeing the face we love best on earth in a crowd, is that of meeting the looks of one who loves what we love, and who has been with us in gone-by hours, too happy ever to return: it is like a sudden ray of sunshine lighting up the heart; and so Cheveley felt, as he unexpectedly caught Mrs. Seymour’s eyes, as she was wading through the crowd, to speak to him.

“I am so glad to see you,” said she, extending her hand; “you remind me so of old times: do you remember at Milan? at Venice? and, poor dear Julia,—my heart aches when I think of her; but, come into the little room, where the cameos are, and we can talk at our ease, for there is nobody there.”

Cheveley offered his arm, but his heart was too full to speak, and they walked on in silence, till they reached the room Mrs.

Seymour had mentioned; it was deserted, save by a solitary couple, who were flirting over a cabinet of antiques, but who took flight on the entrance of the new comers. Cheveley had always liked Mrs. Seymour, but he now positively loved her, for the affectionate manner in which she had spoken of Lady De Clifford.

"And I am so glad to see you looking so well," said Cheveley, seating himself on the sofa beside her. "Have you heard from Mrs. Saville lately, and—and Lady De Clifford?"

"Why, as for Fanny, she is so taken up with Love and Latimers, that she is a most unprincipled correspondent, getting over head and ears in one's debt; but I heard from poor Julia to-day, though I won't tell you what she said of your speech, in answer to Lord Melford's, for it would make you too vain."

And *did* she read it?" said Cheveley, a flush of pleasure suffusing his face, as he asked the question.

"That did she; but I have no time to talk of speeches, even though they be *yours*; for you see in me a regular fury."

"Then you manage to conceal it wonderfully," smiled Cheveley.

"No I do n't, nor I do n't want to conceal it. Oh! if I were but a man! I've always wished this, but I wish it now more than ever."

"Pray make me your deputy," laughed Cheveley, "even before I know what services you require of me."

"A very simple one: nevertheless, one I cannot delegate to you, for fear of what a maiden aunt of mine calls the consequences; nothing more or less, than to kick or horsewhip that wretch De Clifford."

A cloud passed over Cheveley's face, as he replied, "Why? what can he have done to you?"

"To me, personally, nothing; but not content with the ill-usage of every description he has for years heaped upon that poor injured wife of his, he has had the base falsehood, and cowardly meanness, as his own conduct becomes worse, to give out that *her* temper and extravagance is the cause of their not being together now; and for the few days I have been in town, I have heard nothing else, till my blood actually boils with indignation; especially as it is only in her letter of to-day, that Julia mentions having been dunned for a bill of Miss Laura Priest's, the creature he is now living with, who it appears has dared to take Lady De Clifford's name; being shielded and countenanced on all occasions by that disgrace to human nature, Lord De Clifford's mother. And to think, because he is the tool of the basest political faction that ever existed, that he is to be upheld, and supported in the world, and that there is not a human being with sufficient honesty and courage to vindicate her: oh! it is too, too bad."

"It is *too* bad," said Cheveley, leaning his forehead upon his hand; "but don't you know, that in this, our moral country,

private vices are always merged in public virtues? with one man's pet sins, no other man has a right to interfere: above all with the treatment of wives, for a wife is a man's own exclusive property, an ambulating chatel, for whose comparative value the law has recently established a tariff; for I read in the police report, a few days ago, that a fellow having severely beaten his wife, and his donkey on the same day, the worthy magistrate fined him fifteen shillings for the latter outrage, accompanied with a lecture on cruelty to animals; and added another five for the former but lesser misdemeanor. Poor Lady De Clifford! her brothers are out of the country; and, unfortunately, other men having no acknowledged right to interfere with her husband's mean persecutions, and glaring vices, would only injure her by attempting it. Besides, as I before said, this is a moral country, and as long as men 'speak by the card,' no one ever thinks of testing their words by their actions. And in speeches and political articles, no one utters more sublime sentiments than Lord De Clifford; to say nothing of his having laboured indefatigably, in both, to etherealize the Newgate calendar, and prove that vice ceases to be vice, when indulged in by superior natures. Now considering how prone all men are to evil, you must confess, that the philosophy that would destroy the tolls, and barriers, established by narrow-minded virtue, along the high road of crime, and the sophistry that would macadamize and render it smooth and pleasant, is entitled to the gratitude and applause of the mass of mankind. Hypocrisy, too, next to wealth, is the most powerful lever of life; and this Lord De Clifford possesses in an eminent degree; no one knows better than he does, 'qu'il faut hasarder un petit poisson pour prendre un grand;' and plausibility is the bait that best catches that great Leviathan, public opinion."

"Still, I say," replied Mrs. Seymour, "that it is a thousand pities there is no one to unmask this hypocrisy."

"Why should there be, when it is chiefly exercised against a woman, and that woman a wife? and, as far as the intercourse between man and man goes, pistol-balls and black-balls regulate to a nicety their moral code. Besides, thanks to the Whigs, falsehood and duplicity no longer lie under the stigma with which prejudice for so many years oppressed them; for now-a-days, when men tell the most barefaced lies, they clearly prove, to their own and every one else's satisfaction, that it was only another and more circuitous way of telling the truth; and in political parlance, when one man calls another a liar, a coward, or a blackguard, he explains, that he only means to say, that the honourable gentleman is the soul of truth, the phoenix of valour, and the quintessence of respectability. So much for our English synonyms."

"Ah!" sighed Mrs. Seymour, like all men, you treat the subject

lightly, and think we women have nothing to do but silently endure."

"If you think so," said Cheveley, "you widely mistake me; for I defy any woman to think so badly, or, at least worse, of my own sex than I do; for I look upon civilized man, giving way to his civilized vices, and exercising to the utmost the brutal power awarded him by those iniquitous laws which he himself has made, as a perfect monster; but, until women think, feel, and act a little more like rational beings than they do at present, I fear their most miserable and degraded position will never be bettered."

"You are now talking so sensibly," said Mrs. Seymour, smiling, "that I could listen to you for ever. But it is very late; every body seems to be going, and I suppose we must go too."

So saying, she rose and took Cheveley's arm, who handed her to her carriage, promising he would call upon her the next day.

Upon returning home, he inquired if any one had called; but was answered in the negative. He retired to bed, but not to sleep; for he was feverish and over-excited, and moreover angry with himself, for the self-delusion he had tried to practise, in referring his resolution not to fight with Lord De Clifford solely to moral objections, when, after all, the fear of placing another and insurmountable barrier between him and Julia was the strongest, and therefore perhaps the real motive from which he acted. Still he had always had fixed and decided opinions on this subject, and thought with Seneca, "Our fate is at hand, and the very hour that we have set for another man's death may, peradventure, be prevented by our own!"

CHAPTER XXX.

"To fight, to bleed, perchance, to die!
But fight you *must*." "Then I fight *shy*."

Ego ero principia.—TERENT.

Indignus qui illi matellam porrigat,
Dispeream si tu Pyladi præstare matellam
Dignus es, aut porcos pascere Pirithoi.—MARTIAL.

"Objection!" exclaimed Mrs. Crummles; "can it be possible?"

"Oh, I hope not," cried Miss Snivellicci; "you surely are not so cruel. Oh, dear me! well, I—to think of that now, after all one's looking forward to it."

NICHOLAS NICKLEBY, No. VIII. p. 230.

No sooner had Cheveley left Lord De Clifford on the preceding night, than the latter determined to repair to Mr. Frederick Feedwell's chambers, in Lincoln's Inn, and request his services in conveying a challenge to Lord Cheveley; but, as he walked along the Strand, the fumes of the wine evaporated, and he began to think, as he had often thought before, when on the eve of fighting a duel

(which, however, he had never yet fought), that it was a very foolish business, and that if he could in any way get out of it, it would be as well. To be sure, were he quite certain which way the affair would terminate, it might be of service to him with his own party; but then events and wishes are nine times out of ten *vice versa*, and plots, like curses, are generally reversionary. Thus pondering, he found himself in the great square of Lincoln's Inn. As he ascended the steps of Mr. Frederick Feedwell's house, a figure emerged from the next door, which, as it stood under the lamp, Lord De Clifford recognised with an exclamation of "God bless me! Nonplus, is that you?"

"Ah! how do, my lord? Should have been to see you, but only arrived in town at nine to-night by the Dover mail, and have been ever since here, with my friend Serjeant Puzzlecase, about another law-suit that rascal Whoson Hatter has got me into; and seventy thousand pounds are not to be let to run away from one, without a man looking which way they go. Ladies well, eh?—Miss Fanny married, all that sort of thing—your brother has got *an-ice* place in Russia—ha! ha! ha! There's is worse in the north, as the proverb says: and how are you, quite bang up to the mark, eh?"

"I hope I shall be to-morrow," said Lord De Clifford; "for I've a duel to fight."

"A duel! whew—fair and softly, as lawyers go to heaven. I'll inform against you, 'pon my soul I will; fighting is all nonsense, unless one's paid for it, which one never is in these 'piping' and crying 'times of peace,' as my friend Shakspeare has it."

Lord De Clifford was much of the major's way of thinking; but still, for the look of the thing, he was obliged to give a decided shake of the head, as he replied, "It must be; so come with me, will you, up to Feedwell's rooms. I want him to be my second."

"Well, if you *will* fight, why do n't you get your friend Fonnoir for a second? for he's long and dismal, like a winter's evening, and the very look of him, I should think, would frighten a man into an apology; but who's your mark, eh?"

"That d—d Tory, Cheveley."

"My stars and garters! why, I always thought he and you were as thick as mud in December."

"You thought wrong, then," growled Lord De Clifford, as Mr. Frederick Feedwell's door opened, and he cleared the first flight of stairs, followed at a slower pace by the portly figure of Major Nonplus. It being now "the very witching time of night," Frederick was in bed: but groaning amain, and tossing to and fro in the night-mare, like a whale on a sand-bank. In the midst of the cosmetics on the toilette, towered, like a cedar of Lebanon, his Hyperian whig, supported by a block not much thicker than its

owner's head. The mirror was so covered with wax, as scarcely to leave a bit of the glass visible, thereby proving his Catholic worship of himself, as he was evidently in the habit of lighting tapers before the shrine of his idolatry, and, to judge from appearances, had *waxed* fonder and fonder of his own image. About a dozen wedding-rings, tied together with a piece of blue riband, and as many different locks of hair, much resembling those in hair-dressers' shops, "affichéing" themselves as pupils of the "Tyrean dye," with a miniature of himself, attached to a hair chain, formed part of the paraphernalia of the dressing-table.

"Come, get up, my good fellow, will you?" said Lord De Clifford, pushing Frederick with his stick, as one does a star-fish, on the sea-shore; "get up, I want you to take a message to a man for me."

"N-n-no more," muttered Frederick, "the truffles are bad, and the tongue should have been roasted 'à l'Espagnol.'"

"Come, turn out, my fine fellow, and do n't lie there, giving tongue like a hound," said Major Nonplus, suiting the action to the word, with an emphatic slap upon the most defenceless portion of Mr. Frederick Feedwell's person, who, mechanically applying his hand to the injured spot, exclaimed,—

"Oh! take it away, take it away, it's so d—d hard, I never shall be able to digest it."

Here another push from Lord De Clifford completely awoke him, and perceiving that two *men* were standing by his bedside, he immediately put himself "en scène," by starting up, placing his hands before his eyes, and crying out,—

"M-m-Mary! Caroline! what brought you both here together?"

"Ha! ha! ha! I look very like a Caroline, truly," said Major Nonplus,— "So you must be the Miss Molly, my lord; but I say, Feedwell," continued he, hooking the string of wedding-rings off the table, with the end of his cane, "How came you by this bunch of *crim. cons.*, eh?"

"Ah," said Frederick, with a dyspeptic sigh, "I have paid for them."

"That I'll be bound you did for *every one* of them," roared the major.

"That dreadful laugh," shrugged Frederick, to Lord De Clifford, jerking the two forefingers of his right hand above his head.

"Feedwell," said Lord De Clifford, "get up; I must fight to-morrow morning, or at least the next day, and you must be my second."

Now, there was nothing Mr. Frederick Feedwell so much delighted in, as being made a *personnage* of, having his name in the papers (no matter on what account), and being talked about, if it were only to be abused; so, rubbing his hands, and springing out of bed, he exclaimed,

“Who is it, my d-d-dear fellow?”

“Oh, that d—d fellow, Cheveley.”

Mr. Frederick Feedwell was a *true friend*, and therefore, never missed an opportunity of infusing a little wormwood into his sweetest counsels, or most sympathetic moments; consequently, he replied, as he doffed his night-cap, and donned his clothes,—

“Oh, Lord Cheveley! the man who made that speech that the world has been ringing with! he certainly is the be-be-best speaker that has appeared for ages; it is to be hoped, my de-de-dear De Clifford, that he’s not as good a shot as he is an orator, or you’ll have no chance, you know.” And up went Mr. Frederick Feedwell’s two fingers, as if registering his prophecy on the ceiling.

“What d—d stuff you do talk, my dear Feedwell,” said Lord De Clifford; and, ringing the bell violently, added, “have you any soda water in the house?”

“Yes, plenty; but tell me how you got into this squ-squ-squabble with Lord Cheveley.”

“Why, it’s a foolish business altogether,” replied Lord De Clifford, as he seated himself in a chair, stretched out his feet horizontally, pushed his hat over his eyes, and placed the head of his cane between his teeth; I jostled against him coming out of the Haymarket, and telling him to get out of the way, he answered me devilish impertinently, *not, of course, seeing who I was*: one word brought on another, and I said he should hear from me, and there the matter rests till you go to him; but—”

“Of course, my dear fellow,” stuttered Mr. Frederick Feedwell, hurrying his toilette as he spoke, and delighted in the prospect of a quarrel, wherein his own personal safety was not the least endangered, “I’ll go to him the first thing in the morning; but I shall be ready now in five minutes, and will walk home with you, where we can make all the necessary arrangements.”

“Ay, exactly so,” interposed Major Nonplus, as he poured out a large bumper of hock, that had arrived with the soda water.

“But I think,” resumed Lord De Clifford, “that it might be settled in some way; for, you see, I want to speak on the Corn Laws, on Thursday; and then this d—d election in two months, and altogether—not that *I* would make an apology, my dear Feedwell, but if you could get *him* to do so,—you understand.”

Mr. Frederic Feedwell did understand perfectly, but being much addicted to what is vulgarly called “blowing the coals,” he laughed, as he replied,—

“Ah! my dear fellow, “*facies tua computat annos.*” Lord De Clifford lowered, and rising with solemn anger from his seat, said coldly, “if you cannot be serious for one moment, even on an occasion like this, I shall seek the assistance of some one else.”

The amiable Frederick perceived he had gone too far, and, by

no means wishing to lose the support of Lord De Clifford's acquaintance, and passing in rapid review before his mind's eye the sundry dinners and innumerable petty squabbles that would take place in the ensuing election, he instantly changed his tone to one of friendly consideration, and said, as he placed his hand on Lord De Clifford's arm, and drew him back from the door,—

“My dear fellow, you quite mistake me, I only meant to say, what I always think, that I don't know so clever, or so a-a-a-able a person anywhere as yourself; but we'll talk over this matter in Grosvenor Street,” casting a significant look at Major Nonplus, which said as plainly as look could say it, “when we are not ‘gêné’ by him.”

“I think though,” chimed in that worthy individual, as he paused between each mouthful of a second glass of hock which he had taken to *taste*, having swallowed the first without that preliminary,—“I think Lord De Clifford is quite right, that, as he has a speech to make, and an election coming on, there is no use in his fighting, but quite the contrary.”

“I!” thundered Lord De Clifford, “I never said any such thing, sir.”

“Well, then, you meant it, my dear lord, and that is the same thing.”

“It is not the same thing, sir, and—and damn it, *I'm* going to fight, and *I will* fight.”

“No, now indeed, I don't think you'll have any occasion,” persisted the poor one-idea'd major, pouring out a third relay of wine, “for the marquis is a very *gentlemanly* man, and I'm sure everything will be as amicably settled as you can wish. Very sound good wine, that; in capital order, and I'm in marching order; ha! ha! ha! so good night, good night, I hope I shall hear that it's all right to-morrow.” And, securing his umbrella, ever anxious to guard against water of any kind, he departed.

That night Mr. Frederick Feedwell passed in Grosvenor-street, concocting plans with Lord De Clifford, how to manage, so as to get Lord Cheveley to *apologize* for the insult that had been offered to himself. Accordingly, at nine, the following morning, Mr. Frederick Feedwell sallied forth, and Lord De Clifford trusting implicitly to the great Frederick's diplomacy, paced up and down his library, spouting out his intended *impromptu* speech on the Corn Laws.

When Mr. Feedwell arrived at Lord Cheveley's house in Carlton Gardens, he found it undergoing repair, and therefore had to retrace his steps to the Clarendon.

“Pray, is Lord Cheveley at home?” inquired he of the porter.

“Really can't say, sir, but I'll call his servant.” Sanford appearing, the same question was put to him; and after eyeing the

querist with that supercilious “Who on earth are *you*?” sort of look, which servants bestow on persons of not very aristocratic appearance, when they are not chartered by being on their master’s or mistress’s visiting list, replied,—

“He *is* at home, sir, but his lordship’s bell has not rung yet.”

“Will you give him this card,” said Frederick, “and say I wish to see him on particular business?”

“Perhaps you’ll be so good as to wait in the drawing-room, sir, till my lord’s bell rings.”

“I’ll ge-ge-go into the drawing-room, but will thank you to give Lord Cheveley that card immediately, as the business is pe-pe-pe-pressing.”

“May I ask, sir, if you come on the part of Lord De Clifford? for the marquis gave orders that he was to be informed if any one came from his lordship.”

“I do, and shall be much obliged by Lord Cheveley’s seeing me as soon as possible.”

“I’ll give your message, sir, directly,” said Sanford, closing the drawing-room door, as Mr. Frederick Feedwell drew a chair to the open window, with a laudable curiosity to see what Bond Street looked like at half-past nine in the morning:—but all was like his own eyes, wide, dim, and vacant. He was beginning to weary of the similitude, as it was now a quarter-past ten, when suddenly he espied Fuzboz, sitting in a sort of Sardanapalus attitude, with folded arms and slouched beaver, in the very centre of an open-back cabriolet, a blue fustian bag between his feet, and a half-bound quarto under his arm. He might have, and most probably had been eating “mutton cold,” as he had been confined at home for the last week with a great press of business, though he certainly had *not been* “cutting blocks with a razor;” for his chin, like Mr. Metcalf’s tooth-brushes, was composed of “*real* bristles;” but Fuzboz was in the habit of “going the whole hog”—so no wonder.

“Fuzboz! Fuzboz!” cried Mr. Frederick Feedwell, from the balcony, “Stop one moment.”

And accordingly, hearing his euphaneous cognomen, Fuzboz looked up at the window from whence the sound proceeded, and ordered the driver to stop; while Mr. Frederick Feedwell, who did everything violently, rushed down stairs into the street; and, after having shaken Fuzboz’s hydrophobia-looking hand, spluttered out,

“I only wanted to know at what hour I should be likely to find you at ‘the Investigator’ office to-day, as De-De-De Clifford is almost in for a duel with Lord Cheveley; but I’ve come down here to try and get him out of it. But, at all events, we must have a panegyric in ‘the Investigator’ on De Clifford, whichever way the affair terminates.”

“But what? how? I mean, when did all this happen? Very odd

he has not consulted me," said Fuzboz, looking leading articles at Mr. Frederick Feedwell.

"Oh, he's not had time, nor have I either, to tell you any more now; for he knocked me up at one this morning about it. But remember, my dear fellow, that Cheveley's a Te-Te-Te-Tory, and gave Lord Melford that terrible mauling about Lord Denham's business."

"Yes, yes, he shall be dealt with accordingly; but if you'll be down at the office with me at half-past three, and tell me all the particulars, I can better understand what's to be done, for just now I'm in a hurry too, on my way to the Moon office, to get a paragraph put in about Lady De Clifford's extravagance. Laura Priest's brother, you know, writes for the Moon; and as people are beginning to make themselves impertinently busy about some facts they have got hold of concerning De Clifford, it is necessary for us, and all his friends, to attack his wife in every covert way we can, in order to guard him against a meddling world."

"Qu-qu-quite right, my dear fellow; so 'vare' for the present."

This conversation was carried on in a whisper, while the cabman was arranging the decorations of his horse's head. And when Mr. Frederick Feedwell re-ascended to the drawing-room, he found that Lord Cheveley had not yet appeared, though the time-piece announced that it only wanted a quarter to eleven. Frederick looked wistfully at the prawns, cold chicken, and "pâté de Strasbourg" on the breakfast-table, and thought, with a sigh, what sacrifices to friendship (!) the "flat, stale, and unprofitable usages of this world" compel a man to make.

There is something tragic in deep affliction, that always goads people into soliloquizing; and Frederick sighed forth, as he raised his eyes tenderly to the looking-glass, "'A ogni cosa è rimedio fuora qu'alla morte,' says the proverb; but I can add, or *hunger* in another man's house, when you come to him on an affair of honour." The word was scarcely uttered, when the door opened, and Lord Cheveley advanced, apologizing for having detained Mr. Feedwell so long, and, seating himself, begged Frederick would do the same.

"I am co-co-come, my lord," commenced the latter, "on the part of Lord De Clifford, touching a misunderstanding that occurred between him and your lordship, under the portico of the Haymarket theatre last night." Here Frederick paused, evidently expecting the aid of an interruption; but Cheveley continuing silent, and merely bowing, he resumed: "I must say, though I say it entirely from myself, that I could wish to see this matter amicably adjusted, thinking it a thousand pities that the valuable lives of two persons who *have been* friends"—(here a slight curl of Cheveley's lip induced Mr. Frederick Feedwell to add)—"I believe

I am correct in using the term 'friends,' my lord,—should be risked for so te-te-te-trifling a cause."

As he finished this peroration, Lord Cheveley recognized the gastronomic Giovanni, who had deplored Lady De Clifford's temptations at the Athenæum; and a mingled feeling of indignation and disgust coming over him, he replied, coldly and haughtily, "With regard to risking my own or another's life, sir, I have fixed and, I am sorry to say, peculiar opinions. With regard to a misunderstanding between Lord De Clifford and myself, there was none—for we understood each other perfectly; but, with regard to an apology, whether he ——"

Here Sanford entered with a card. "The gentleman is anxious to see you, my lord."

But before Cheveley could take the card off the salver, and tell Sanford that he could not see any one then, Major Nonplus (for it was no less a personage) followed his credentials, and, panting like a seal out of water, exclaimed,

"Delighted to see you, my lord—knew, if it was only for the sake of old lang syne, you'd be at home to *me*; so came up without more ado. Hope I may be instrumental in arranging all this business *comfortably*."

"What business?" inquired Cheveley annoyed at his intrusion, and not imagining he could possibly allude to the duel.

"Why, this tiff between you and Lord De Clifford, to be sure; but I'm certain *he's* no hostile wishes, but quite the contrary: for as he said last night in my friend Feedwell's chambers, having a speech to make on the Corn Laws, and an election coming on, and all that sort of thing, it would be rather provoking if he was to be killed before he got through either."

Cheveley could not help smiling, at perceiving that Major Nonplus had lost none of his wonted tact in serving his friends; but Frederick looked oyster-knives at him, and wished that he might that very day order mushrooms and get toadstools, as he turned to Cheveley, and stammered out——

"My lord Major Ne-Ne-Ne-Nonplus makes some strange mistake: for though Lord De Clifford did say something about his speech on the Corn Laws, and his approaching election, in my room last night, yet it certainly was not coupled with any reference whatever to his meeting with your lordship, and——"

"That's right Fred—go it, my boy!—never stick at anything to serve a friend; and lies 'au blanc' are nothing more than lentils after the same fashion." And so saying, the major gave Mr. Feedwell a slap on the back, which must, had he eaten that morning, have considerably impeded his digestion.

"Whatever cogent reasons Lord de Clifford may have for not wishing to go out with me," said Cheveley, "they cannot exceed *my* determination not to fight with him; and"——

Here Frederick rallied, and, putting on a bullying tone, said, "If you do not *wish* to accept Lord De Clifford's challenge, I shall be happy to convey any apology to him with which your lordship may charge me."

"In the first place, sir," replied Cheveley, "*as yet I have received no challenge from Lord De Clifford: if he sent any, it is still in your custody, for you have not delivered it to me. In the next place, it is Lord De Clifford that does not wish to fight with me, and I who do not chuse to fight with him. For apologies, in accepting his, when he sends it, he will have received mine; neither his speech on the Corn Laws, nor his election, shall receive any impediments from me; and now, sir,*" concluded Cheveley, ringing the bell, and pointing to the door, "I have the honour of wishing you a very good morning."

Frederick seeing that he had a very resolute person to deal with, and that Major Nonplus, according to custom, had completely let the cat out of the bag with regard to Lord De Clifford, and marred everything, thought it politic to make good his retreat; and muttering, for his own satisfaction, when he got outside the drawing-room door, that he was sure Lord De Clifford would be happy to accept *Lord Cheveley's apology*, repaired first to Fuzboz, where they mutually concocted a paragraph, highly laudatory of Lord De Clifford's honour and valour, and more than intimating that nothing but Lord Cheveley's *reluctance* to fight had prevented a hostile meeting between them; concluding with an assertion, that it was in defence of the liberal and enlightened political principles Lord De Clifford had always advocated with such consistent firmness, that the misunderstanding had originated. This done, he returned to Lord De Clifford, making up the best story he could, and entirely attributing his not having brought him off with more flying colours, to Major Nonplus's usual kind zeal in serving his friends. Meanwhile, the worthy major remained to breakfast with Cheveley, and soon succeeded in making the "*pâté de Strasbourg*" look as foolish as he had done Mr. Frederick Feedwell.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Whoso findeth a good wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord.—PROVERBS xviii, 22.

What frantic voices rise at times;
Wailing or glorying in their crimes;
As faith, or frenzy, or despair,
Inspire their latest, wildest prayer.—READE'S *Deluge*.

Bring flowers to the captive's lonely cell,
They have tales of the joyous woods to tell,
Of the balmy air, and the free blue sky,
And the bright world shut from his languid eye.—F. HEMANS.

It was an unaccountable thing, but so it was, that as the Reverend Nathaniel Peter Hoskins advanced in his designs upon Miss

Lavinia Mac Screw, he also progressed in his evangelical tenets. He had lately written a tract, entitled "The Warming-pan of Faith: to take the Chill off the Death-bed of Sinners." A new stage coach had also been recently established at "The Mitre," at Triverton, the announcement of which, owing to a false punctuation, ran thus—

"THE STAR

"A New Light, Day Coach,"

and was consequently supposed, by all persons of "the right way of thinking," to have been established for the safe conveyance of *heavenly bodies* by the pious Hoskins. So true is Seneca's observation—"that every man (ay, and woman too) takes notes for his or her own study. Put a grammarian to a Virgil, he never heeds the philosophy, but the verse. In the same meadow the cow finds grass, the dog starts a hare, and the stork snaps a lizard. Tully's "De Republica" finds work both for the philosopher, the philologist, and the grammarian. The philosopher wonders how it was possible to speak so much against justice. The philologist makes the observation, that Rome had two kings: the one without a father, and the other without a mother; for it is a question who was Servius's mother, and of Ancus's father there is not so much as any mention. The grammarian takes notice that *reapse* is used for *reipsa*, and *seipse* for *seipse*. And so every man makes his notes for his own purpose." And thus it was even at Triverton and Blichingly: where one half of the inhabitants conceived "The Star" to be a sort of Elijah's car, designed by the exemplary Peter to convey them ultimately to heaven; while others thought it a lucrative but disgraceful speculation, derogatory to the dignity of a functionary of the church; and, as frequently happens, when the world are good enough to divide and differ in their opinions of an individual, both were wrong, for the Reverend Nathaniel Peter Hoskins had nothing on earth to do with it. No—his was by no means

"The love of the moth for 'The Star,'"

but the love of dividends, debentures, and three per cent. consols, unencumbered, save with a mortgage of Miss Mac Screw.

Nine months had past away, in a series of constant attentions on his part to the fair Lavinia. Game, lampreys, oysters, char, and Dunstable larks, were the constant accompaniments of his visits in Lavender Lane: so that, like a file, he had literally eaten his way into the heart of Miss Mac Screw. I use this simile, for nothing less could have had any effect upon so hard a substance as composed the anatomy of that amiable spinster's left side.

Still, as midsummer advanced, "the lovely young Lavinia" absented herself from church, dreading lest her Peter should be rash enough to attempt to win his wager; but hearing from the

neighbours that he had never even alluded to it, and being moreover much tempted by some finery her mother, whom she always designated by the endearing epithet of "*memma*," had sent her, she took courage, the last Sunday in June, of a very sultry day, to display it all. It consisted of a white, stamped, cardboard bonnet, beautifully relieved with *the* black hollyhocks; a muslin dress, lined with daffadowndilly-coloured glazed calico; a muslin spencer, lined with the same material, only *green*: being exceedingly *warm*, she thought a goose-down tippet, from whence much of the down had absconded, showing here and there mangey patches of discoloured white calico, would have a cool effect; while a pair of wash-leather gloves, and nankin boots, laced up the front, completed this charming toilette. Parasol she had none, but she had what did duty as such,—a Chinese umbrella, round and flat at the top, like a mushroom, with a thick bamboo stick, which finished its likeness to the fungi genus. Thus equipped, she sallied from her domicile in Lavender Lane, up the High Street, down Silver Street, and so on to Cross Street, where the church was situated; and after having bestowed so much care on the decoration of her person, it must have been a great source of satisfaction to Miss Mac Screw to think, that the fairest lady that ever walked in a royal "*cortège*" never attracted half so much attention as she did, perambulating these thoroughfares of the flourishing town of Blichingly.

Arrived at the church door, she was surprised to see not only the Simmons's blue coach, the Tymmons's green fly, and the Doctor's gig, but also Lords Cheveley, Sudbury, and Shuffleton's carriages, with divers other unknown and anti-country looking equipages; a stage coach also, full of "*the officers*," from Triverton, drove up, just as the last toll of the bell sounded.

"Bless me!" said Miss Mac Screw, as she inflicted fruitless poundings on the stiff and rusty spring of the Chinese umbrella; "all the world seem to have come to Blichingly church to-day; hope it's not a charity sermon; quite ruinous so many of them; however, I've got two *new* farthings that *memma* gave me; they'll look like sovereigns in the plate;—like sovereigns, and I need not give again for some time." Here she renewed her attacks upon the umbrella, but in vain, so popping her head in at the church door, she beckoned to the sextoness, and, consigning the celestial umbrella to her care, desired her to leave it in the vestry, till service was over, as it would not shut. The church was indeed crowded to excess, and notwithstanding the indecorum of such a proceeding, an ill-suppressed titter ran through the congregation the moment Miss Mac Screw appeared. Nor was it till she was fairly seated in

Mrs. Tymmons's pew, which being immediately opposite the pulpit, was partly concealed by it, that this unhallowed mirth subsided.

Mrs. Tymmons looked redder, and fatter, and hotter than ever. Mr. T. had had his last bill of costs paid, by the Dowager Lady De Clifford, the week before, and had consequently got an up-in-the-world sort of look, peculiar to attorneys with fat faces, snub noses, and "*fine families*."

Miss Seraphina had made every preparation for a faint, by taking off her gloves, untying the strings of her bonnet, placing a bottle of salts by the side of her prayer-book, and her shoulder in juxta-position with that of her brother Joseph, that he might be ready to receive her in his arms, when the catastrophe took place. Miss Isabella looked every five minutes at the painted window behind her, that "*the officers*" might have the pleasure of seeing her face. Mr. Rush looked, as usual, the essence of sentiment and sensibility, and even more martial than the officers, inasmuch, as having adopted the present fashion for the hair, he wore his fire-locks on his shoulders. Master Grimstone, though in church, was as busy as usual, for he had sucked the green strings of his velvet cap quite blue, rubbed off all the blacking of his shoes on his socks, ran a pin into his sister's Isabella's arm, and double-dog's-eared all his mother's prayer-book. Notwithstanding these trifling incidents, the service proceeded without any interruption, till a linnet flew in at the window, and lighting on one of Miss Macscrew's black hollyhocks, endeavoured to peck the artificial petals. This greatly amused "*the officers*," and so excited the poetical imagination of Mr. Rush Tymmons, that he could not resist the strong impulse of noting down on the spot, in the fly-leaf of his hymn book, some *very original* ideas, about the human heart being often lured on by false hopes and appearances, like the bird on Miss Mac Screw's bonnet! But even poetry must yield to preaching.

Mr. Hoskins ascended the pulpit; Miss Mac Screw fidgetted on her seat even more than usual. Mr. Rush closed the hymn book. Silence reigned around; and at the end of a sufficiently solemn pause, after the prayer, Peter hemmed three times, and, in a distinct and sonorous voice, gave out the following text, keeping his eyes steadily fixed on Miss Mac Screw.

"My beloved brethren, you will find in the lxxiii Psalm, at the 23rd and 26th verses, these words:

"'Nevertheless I am continually with thee. Thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee.'"

Mr. Hoskins then proceeded, without any reference whatever to his text, to assure the whole of his congregation, that they were

going, one and all, by the rail-road of sin, straight to the infernal regions, whose fires would consume them till the *end of eternity*. (1) He warned them also against the abomination of balls, and plays, which were likely to demoralize the neighbourhood during the approaching election, and the civil authorities he especially admonished against gourmandizing dinners; "for what saith St. Paul, 'Be ye not drunk with wine.' And, oh! my beloved friends, those midnight orgies called suppers, are of equal iniquity, where the mayor and corporation, who have souls as well as bodies, though people might not believe it, go into the idolatries of the ancient Egyptians, and appear to worship *Ham*!" But this was the exciting and stirring part of Mr. Hoskins' discourse: he soon grew soporific and consolatory; he told them that "heaven was a feather-bed, that would never want making! and faith a pillow, that would never want shaking!" (2) At this point he perceived that the whole congregation, (except Miss Mac Screw, whom nervousness kept awake,) had suited the action to the word, and fallen fast asleep. This was the consummation he had so devoutly wished, and for which reason, he had assumed his most evangelical voice, and spun out his exordium to an hour's length; giving three groans, he resumed, "Oh! ye generations of vipers! I speak unto you the words of everlasting life, and you sleep on your posts, in vain I say unto you, watch; watch, for it is not the things of this world I bid you watch; and ye are of the earth, earthy. Far different would it be, were I to pour into your ears the tunings of sinful merriment; you would not sleep nor slumber then, but rejoice, as did the soul of Saul, at the strains of the harp of David. Here then, oh! children of wrath, prove to your God how much less you attend to him, than to the meanest thing which one of his creatures have made!" So saying, Peter drew a kit from his pocket, and struck up, "Haste to the Wedding," (3) which having completely awoke all who slept, he concluded with a solemn reprobation of his parishioners, for sleeping over his sermon, and waking to the sound of a fiddle!

Miss Mac Screw fainted, for she felt as if her life had "sold out." Not so Peter, "*Io triomphe*" was written in every line of his countenance; he had caused it to be cautiously but widely disseminated, that, on the last Sunday of the month, it was his intention to play his bold stroke for a wife, and accordingly the church had filled beyond his most sanguine expectations; and the congregation ap-

(1) It was the late Edward Irving who first made this very interesting discovery in chronology.

(2) Ridiculous and far-fetched as this may appear, the author heard it nearly verbatim, with more, that is really too absurd to write, from a methodist preacher, about four months ago.

(3) This occurrence really happened about twenty-two years ago.

peared as reluctant to separate, as they had been eager to assemble; "*the officers*," in particular, who were profuse in their offers of assistance to the amiable invalid, remarking at the same time, that it was rather anticipating events, to faint before the wedding, however orthodox and indispensable it was to do so during the ceremony. But, at length, with the aid of Miss Seraphina's salts, Miss Isabella's fan, and Mrs. Tymmons's "Poor thing," Miss Mac Screw revived sufficiently to be conducted to the vestry by Mr. Tymmons, who whispered, that he would draw up the marriage-settlements gratis; but not to mention this to "*Mrs. T.*," as, *gentlemen* with large families could not exactly venture to tell everything to their wives, though there was not a more indulgent or forgiving wife anywhere than his. "Still, money is money, ma'am, as *you* know, and children are children, as *I* know," concluded Mr. Tymmons, as he opened the vestry door, and placed Miss Mac Screw in an arm-chair, where the fascinating Peter instantly fell at her feet, and, seizing her hand, exclaimed,

"Mine, *all* mine! by all that's fair; and, even when the first raptures of the honeymoon are over, *augh* feel that the *stirling* qualities of my Lavinia will make her as valuable in her Peter's estimation as she is now."

Here Peter attempted to execute a kiss, but Miss Mac Screw repulsed the vicious manifestation with maidenly propriety.

"Ah! my beloved Lavinia," sighed Peter, "you are right, I cannot lay claim to a *freehold*, until I have a *life interest*: give me, then, the dividend of a promise, and tell me when you will transmute Miss MacScrew into Mrs. Hoskins? this day-week? shall I say this day week? or rather, *will you* say this day week?"

"Oh! this day week is such a short time, such a very short time, you know: sha'n't be able to write to *memma*: generally write to her by sending a newspaper; and seeing it directed by me, she knows I'm well, which is quite satisfactory."

"Well, then, let us send mamma a newspaper, with our marriage in it," suggested Peter, "and then she'll know that you're not only well, but, what is more extraordinary, well married!"

"Oh, but *memma* might be angry—angry, you know, if I did not tell her first."

"Well, then, you must assure her that you never did so before, and *I* sincerely hope, never will do so again; and, after that, I'm sure she cannot be so unreasonable as to continue angry," urged Peter.

"But, tell me," said Miss Mac Screw, with a vain effort to waive the subject, "tell me, when your first name is Nathaniel, why everybody calls you Peter?"

"Why, when *augh* was young, you must know, *augh* was a sad pickle, and my brothers and sisters nick-named me Salt Petre; so,

never having been at Eton, *ough* did not care for the *salt*, you see, but have retained the name of Peter ever since; and, now having told you why I am called Peter, tell me, thou golden dream of all my hopes, when I may call *you mine*."

"Here a knocking was heard at the door, and Peter, thinking it might be the clerk, said, in his parochial voice,

"Enter, beloved."

But it was only Mrs. Tymmons, Miss Seraphina, and Miss Isabella Tymmons, Messieurs Joseph and Rush Tymmons, and Master Grimstone Tymmons, who, all and each, began interceding with Miss Mac Screw for their cousin Peter, whom, they could bear witness, had fairly won her on her own terms.

Whether it was that she feared his resorting to legal and compulsory measures in the event of her refusing, or an habitual dislike to being asked for anything, but, in less than a quarter of an hour, Miss Mac Screw had acceded to Peter's proposals, of espousing him on the following Monday, and Mrs. Tymmons, who understood those sort of things, abdicated the *fly* in favour of the bride and bridegroom elect, who returned tête-à-tête to Lavender Lane, to arrange all farther preliminaries; the first of which was, to write to a Mrs. Crump, the proprietor of furnished apartments in Birmingham, to secure them on the wedding-day, Mr. Hoskins having business in that town, and not liking at the first onset to frighten his bride by the extravagance of going to an hotel.

All unnecessary delays he had carefully avoided, by having taken the precaution to get Mr. Tymmons to draw up the marriage-settlements in advance, leaving certain interstices to be filled up with whatever stipulations he might be able to extort from Miss Mac Screw, or she should insist upon from him.

And now we will leave Miss Mac Screw to prepare her bridal rags, and Peter to spend her money in imagination, while we pay a visit to Mrs. Stokes, and find out what has happened in Blichingly since we were last there. Cheveley had that morning accidentally gone to Blichingly church, not in the least aware of Mr. Hoskins's intended disgraceful exhibition, nor could he participate in the excessive mirth it occasioned, as he felt how much religion was outraged, and decency violated, by such an indecorous proceeding, and thought Mr. Hoskins deserved to be stripped of his gown.

Having ordered the carriage to put up at "The De Clifford Arms," according to the promise he had made Mrs. Stokes in Lee's cottage, he had given orders that it should remain there, and he would walk on to the inn, for Cheveley had an innate love for English villages, and never felt less unhappy than when he was exploring them.

When he arrived at the De Clifford Arms, Richard Brindal was sitting on a bench outside the door, with a pipe in his mouth, a pot

of porter beside him, and the "Triverton Independant," in his hand, which he was spelling over to himself aloud. "The old story," muttered he, as Cheveley entered the inn; "nothing but jails and gibbets for the poor, and yet they tell us a deal about liberty at the *'lections*; the liberty o'scragging us poor folks, I s'pose they means."

But where was Mrs. Stokes? The day that she had so long wished for, hoped for, dreamt of, had at length arrived. Lord Cheveley's horses stood in her stable, his carriage in her yard, and himself in her house; then where was she? why, in a very unusual place, and occupied in a very unusual manner,—with her arms round her husband's neck, sobbing upon his shoulder. When Cheveley stood before them, John Stokes perpetrated sundry bows, his right foot moving to and fro, like the pendulum of a clock, and propping his wife up to the right, till she regained a perpendicular position, he whispered,

"My dear, the *marcus*."

But even these magic words produced no greater effect than to make Mrs. Stokes dry her eyes hurriedly, with the corner of her apron, and exclaim, wringing her hands passionately,

"My lord, they no more took the things than you did; it's all a piece of wickedness, to ruin them. Try, try, for Heaven's sake! my lord, to get them righted."

"Get who righted?" asked Cheveley. "I'm sorry to see you so distressed; but let me know the cause of it, and perhaps I may serve you."

"There, Nancy, do n't take on so; you hear his lordship's goodness: sit down, and I'll tell him the rights on it. You must know, my lord," continued Stokes, "that last Monday Lord De Clifford and the old lady came down to the park, and there was a great many different work-people, masons, carpenters, and such-like, had up there, to do odd jobs about the place. Among others, old Lee was sent for, to do something to a window-frame in Mrs. Frump's room: this made him very angry, and he went himself up to Mr. Grindall at the park, and told him, that never, as long as he lived, would he handle a hammer for Lord De Clifford or his mother, unless it was to knock a nail in their coffins,—and *that* he'd do with pleasure. Grindall called him an impertinent old rascal, and told him never to come near the place again. Now your lordship will please to observe, that it was in the audit-room this took place, and the audit-room is at the foot of the back stairs leading to Mrs. Frump's room. Well, the next day there was a hue and cry over all the place, that a watch of the old lady's, and two diamond shirt-buttons of my lord's, had been stolen out of Mrs. Frump's room, where all my lord's and lady's things were lying at sixes and sevens, half unpacked. Grindall instantly pro-

cured a search-warrant; and not only all the houses of the work-people, but every house in the village, not excepting mine, was ransacked for the lost things:—but, not to keep your lordship too long, I'm now coming to the upshot of the story. My missus was drinking tea with Mary Lee last Thursday evening; she was sitting at work, and the old man was reading, when the officers, with Grindall at their head, walked into the cottage. Lee had heard of the other houses being searched, and therefore was not surprised at seeing them; but, without so much as looking at Grindall, rose up, and civilly gave all his keys to the officers, telling Mary to leave the room; but she only stood the nearer to her father, while the child clung to her as if it was frightened, but never said one word, though it looked every now and then from behind its mother at the strange men. Nancy says it was enough to turn a stone to down. Well, they searched the whole house, and nothing could they find; but when they were going away, 'You have forgotten to look in the old walnut-tree desk, that I keep my bills in,' said Lee; at this Grindall sprung forward, but Lee pushed him back, saying, '*he* should not lay a finger on any thing belonging to him:' in doing this, Grindall's foot slipped, and he fell with his head against the leg of a table, but was not much hurt, though he threatened to have the law of Lee, for what he called an assault; but even the officers declared that there had been no such thing, and then went on to open the desk;—when, turning every thing out, what should they find but the watch and the diamond buttons! at which no one looked surprised but Nancy and Lee himself; but he more than her; for he seemed as if the sight on 'em turned him to stone. Mary looked wild-like for a few minutes; but suddenly flashing, as she does, poor thing! when she gets one of her mad fits, she broke from the child's arm, and seizing Grindall's arm, she shrieked out, 'It's all a vile, vile plot; but he shall not ruin my poor old father, as he has ruined me; he never took the things. If he *must* say, and will have it that they were brought here by any of us, it was *I* that stole them. Drag me to prison then, or where you please, but touch *him* on your peril;' and poor Mary sank on the ground, and clasped her father's feet. But Grindall's fit for his work; for he answered her with a sneer, 'No, no, miss, we ain't going to part ye; you shall both have the same privileges, and be comfortably lodged in Triverton gaol together.'

"So, to make a long story short, my lord, the poor old man, his daughter, and grandchild, were that very night taken to prison, where they are all likely to lie for the next three months, till the 'sizes come on. And my firm belief is," concluded Stokes, striking the table with his clenched hand, "that Lee no more stole the things than I did."

"No, nor than his lordship did," sobbed Mrs. Stokes.

“Then who do you suppose was wicked enough to place the things in Lee’s desk?” asked Cheveley.

“The devil, or some one as bad, my lord, I should say,” replied Stokes.

“I never thought downright bad of Lord De Clifford till now,” said Mrs. Stokes; “but, God forgive me! I can’t help thinking, with poor Mary, that it’s all a diabolical plot of his, to get them out of the way.”

“I should hope,” said Cheveley, “that he was incapable of such wickedness, and that the mystery—for mystery there evidently is—will soon be solved, to the clearing of those poor Lees’ characters as well as his. But one thing I do n’t comprehend: how it was, that Mary Lee fell a victim to Lord De Clifford’s arts; for surely his personal appearance must have been too well known at Blichingly, not to have been recognized through the trifling disguise of a mere change of dress.”

“No, there it is, my lord,” said Stokes; “he never was here since he had been a very little child, till that time he first saw poor Mary. None of us knew his appearance; for he used to go all about the village in that farmer’s dress, and even come and smoke in our bar, and ’twas not till just before he went abroad, that I saw him as Lord De Clifford, and thought I never saw such a likeness in all my life to William Dale! but till I saw his letters to Mary, signed William Dale, and compared them with those to me signed De Clifford, I never could believe that they were one and the same person. But I never knew a good Grimstone yet; they’re like the foxes’ cubs, there’s not a best amongst them.”

“Poor people!” said Cheveley, musingly; “what prison did you say they were in?”

“Triverton, my lord.”

“Well, have the goodness to order my carriage; I’ll see if anything can be done for them.”

“God bless you for that, my lord,” said Mrs. Stokes, “and for what you have already done for them.”

As soon as the carriage was ready, Cheveley departed, bidding Mrs. Stokes keep up her spirits, as he was sure that God would not long allow the innocent to suffer for the guilty; and of the innocence of the Lees he did not entertain the least doubt.

“How many there are in this world,” thought Cheveley, as the carriage rolled on to Triverton, “who upon circumstantial evidence would be ready to condemn this poor old man and his daughter, never recollecting that misfortunes are like mice; and that where one has crept in, hundreds are sure to follow: for in the moral, as in the material world,

‘The great first cause’ is always ‘least understood.’

Mary Lee, from having been betrayed by the machinations of

a heartless profligate, is, of course, looked upon, by the discriminating portion of society, as capable of anything and everything, while the author of her misery struts unsuspected and uncensured through the world. Her father, being deserted and shunned, on the strength of his daughter's seeming dereliction from virtue, by all who had been his companions, receives kindness from none but gipsies and outcasts; consequently, as evil communications proverbially corrupt good manners, he must, of necessity, have degenerated into a thief and a felon! Oh! world! world! how weary I am of your false judgments; your envy, malice, hatred, and uncharitableness; your hollowness and your hypocrisy; your fair words and your foul deeds; your ovations to the strong, and your oppressions to the weak; your libellous defamations of the unprotected, and your lying defences of the powerful. If this be human nature, I'd rather be a dog, and beg to it, than be a man and bear it."

Here the carriage stopped before the door of the town-hall at Triverton, which was at the opposite side of the market-place to the gaol, which stood near the abbey, into which well-dressed and happy-looking people of all ages were flocking to three-o'clock prayers. Cheveley got out, and walked across to the prison, whose high and ponderous walls seemed saturated with gloom, beyond the power of the summer sun and balmy air to dissipate. In answer to Cheveley's knock, the door turned slowly on its hinges, and the porter inquired his business.

"Is there not an old man and his daughter here of the name of Lee?" asked he.

"I really do n't know, sir, but I'll ask the gaoler, if you'll step in."

And accordingly he walked into the large empty court, where every now and then indistinct yells of boisterous mirth broke upon the silence, from the other side of the building. During the few minutes that the porter was absent, a knock came to the door, which being repeated, as though the applicant was impatient, Cheveley tried to open it, but not understanding its mysteries, was obliged to desist till the porter returned, which he did almost immediately, announcing that the gaoler would come in a minute; as he was speaking, the knock was repeated still louder than before, and upon opening it, perceiving no one but a little ragged boy, with sunburnt rosy cheeks, black wicked-looking eyes, no shoes or stockings, a newly-peeled switch in one hand, and a small basket in the other, while round his head was the rim of what had once been a blue cloth cap, the porter's dignity felt somewhat scandalized at having been hurried into attending to so insignificant an intruder, and eyeing Freddy Filps, (for he it was who had come as ambassador from Madge Brindal,) exclaimed, "Hey day!

great cry, and little wool, truly; what may you want, you cat-fed young knave?"

"I want to see John Lee, if you please, sir, or his daughter Mary."

"And what do you want to see them for, my boy?" asked Cheveley, in a kind voice.

Here Freddy, who in general had impudence enough at his command to have supplied all Ireland, looked down at his shoeless feet, and began splitting the switch he held into ribbons, as he replied, in a low voice, never once raising his eyes—

"I've a letter and some flowers, sir, for Mary from Madge, some cherries for little William, and—and a bone for Wasp."

"Well," said Cheveley, smiling, "will you trust these things with me, as I am going to see them, and perhaps you would come back in an hour, in case there should be any answer to the letter?"

"And will you really, sir," said the boy, looking up in Cheveley's face delightedly, as he extended the basket towards him, "will you really take charge of them?"

"I will."

"The flowers for Mary?"

"Yes."

"And the cherries for William?"

"Yes."

"And the bone for the dog, too?"

"Yes—and the bone for the dog, too," said Cheveley, smiling, as he took the basket.

"Thank you, sir," said Freddy; "I'm sure it's very kind of you, and I'll be back in an hour." So saying, he bounded off like a will-o'-the-wisp, leaving Cheveley to speak to the gaoler, who had just hobbled up; for, from the pottle-deep potations of years, he was troubled with the gout. Seeing a gentleman, (a class in whom honest Davie Darby delighted, for his pockets always felt the heavier, and his heart, ay, and, for company's sake, his head too, the lighter, after their visits to the prison,) began bowing most obsequiously, when Cheveley begged to be conducted to Lee's cell.

As Davie limped on before, he began pointing out to his companion all the *comforts* of the prison. "There, sir, be so good as to look through this here side of the gallery, and you'll see the treadmill—fine wholesome exercise as ever was; and out *yander* is the court where the prisoners *amuse themselves* when they're tired o' work; and these here large baskets of bread and cheese *is* for the prisoners' suppers. So you see, sir, they've every comfort, if they would but think so, and what's more, there's nothing *promiscus* or *oncertain* about it, for they're sure of the same to-morrow as they have to-day, and so on *reglar*, till they're turned off, and then, *in course*, there's an end of all their wants. As I

often tell them, and I'm sure the chaplain could n't talk to them more *hedifing* like, I says to 'em, says I, 'You transportable ill-favoured gibbetarians—you—how happy you ought to be that you're free-born Englishmen, and live in a country where *sich* gaols *is pervided* for you as this.' But lor! sir, they're so hardened, that it makes no more impression on them, than if I was to talk to the wall, or this bunch of keys; howsomdever, I does my duty, and it's a satisfaction when one knows that one's conscience has no chance of escape. A prison's the place to larn the world in, for here we know the worst as can happen, and that's what *I* calls the greatest happiness in life."

Here Davie was obliged to take breath, and Cheveley had, at length, an opportunity of making some inquiries about the Lees.

"I hope," said he, "that this poor old man and his daughter are as comfortably lodged, as the place they are in will allow."

"For that matter, sir," replied Davie, "comfortable lodgings are not to be had for nothing in prison, any more than out of it; and them as has nothing can't expect nothing, which is but reasonable, you'll allow, sir."

"Well, but how much would it cost a-week, to provide them with good food, and good beds, while they remain in prison?"

Here Davie began to consider, not what would come under the denomination of either, but how much, as he himself termed it in his mental calculations, he could *stick* Cheveley for.

"Why, let me see, there's two on 'em, the old man, and the young gal. Now there's nothing at all vacant in the way of apartments just now, unless wife and I was to give up two of our own rooms, which would be particklar inconvenient, and therefore come more expensive, you see, sir."

Cheveley did see clearly Mr. Darby's drift, but merely replied,

"Allowing all that,—in a word, how much would it be?"

"Why, sir, to feed 'em too, I could not do it under four guineas a-week."

"Could I see the rooms you mean to give them?"

"Yes, sir, certainly, if you'll take the trouble of turning back again; the house you may see from this, there, that small house next the Governor's across the court," said Davie, pointing to it with his middle finger; "delightful sitivation too, sir; for when the judges and barbisters is down at the 'sizes, we can hear them laughing and carousing at dinner, quite plain, as our house is at the back of the 'Golden Fleece,' where they always puts up."

"These must be delightful sounds, indeed, to the poor prisoners," said Cheveley, smiling.

"To be sure they must, sir," assented Davie, "and this makes the apartments well worth half a guinea a-week more to any prisoner that's fortunate enough to get 'em."

"Very likely, but I think four guineas a-week was what you said."

"Yes, yes, by all means, sir, and I never goes back from my word."

Here they arrived at Mr. Darby's door. Upon that gentleman's lifting the latch, he found his better half fast asleep, in a high-backed arm chair, a bible on her lap, turned upside down, and a black cat with a red collar, also indulging in a siesta, on her shoulder. On a round three-legged oak table before her, a tray, with two cups on it, was laid for tea, and the kettle was boiling clamorously. Yet, notwithstanding these preparations for the Chinese beverage, there was a genial odour of Geneva, (the spirit not the waters,) diffused through the whole apartment, that was peculiarly oppressive to those who were not accustomed to it. The decorations of the room consisted of coloured paper fly-traps, suspended from the ceiling, and two or three ears of Indian corn, pumpkins, ostrich eggs, and peacock's feathers, diversified the range of old teapots and cups, that graced the chimney-piece, with festoons of birds' eggs, branching from each side of a large silver watch, that hung from a nail, in the centre of the wall over the chimney-piece. All round the walls were pinned "last dying speeches," and woodcuts of celebrated murderers and house-breakers; while on the top of a high chest of drawers, that stood behind, or rather by the side of a small door, that opened upon a flight of narrow stairs, leading to the upper apartments, was a cast of Thurtell, and the bone of one of the pork chops he had eaten after murdering Weare.

"Betty, I say, Betty," cried Mr. Darby, chucking Mrs. D. under the chin, till she woke with the pain of biting her own tongue, "it's too soon to lock up for the night yet; get up and show this gentleman the rooms; he wants them for some prisoners."

And as Mrs. Darby curtsied herself quite awake, her husband gave her a telegraphic look, pointed with his thumb over his shoulder at Cheveley, which she perfectly understood to mean, "I've done him."

She consequently redoubled her civilities as she went up stairs before him, to show the rooms, which were small, and contained a bed in each, as clean as white dimity curtains and well-scrubbed floors could make them, while, outside the windows, were rows of green flower-pots containing balsams and mignonette, which gave the rooms a fresh and cheerful appearance, especially as the windows were perfectly bright and clean.

"Let me see," said Cheveley, "the assizes will not be till September."

"Yes, sure, sir," curtsied Mrs. Darby.

"And four guineas a-week is sixteen guineas a-month," resumed Cheveley: "well, here is the first month in advance," and as he threw the money down upon the table, Mr. Darby nimbly trans-

ferred it to his own pocket, though not without the ceremony of bowing over every coin, his wife backing each bow with a curtsy.

“I shall call here occasionally, to see how these poor people get on,” said Cheveley, “and if they are not well cared for in every way, remember I shall deduct one third from the next month’s rent.”

“Oh sir !” exclaimed Mrs. Darby, raising her hands and eyes to the ceiling, as if shocked at any one being able to suspect her of not doing every thing that was right ; “you may depend no one ever wants for *nothing* in *this* house !”

“Well, I hope not,” said Cheveley. “But now show me the way to Lee’s cell, and let these rooms be got ready for them immediately, as I should like to see them settled in them before I go.”

“It shall be done, sir,” said Mrs. Darby, as Cheveley walked away with her husband.

After retracing their steps through the prison, and ascending one storey higher than they had done before, Davie stopped before a small door, and detaching the ponderous bunch of keys from his girdle, selected the key belonging to it, which, as it turned in the rusty wards, echoed dismally through the corridor.

“Have the goodness to leave us for half an hour,” said Cheveley to Darby, as he opened the door.

“Very good, sir,” replied the latter, closing it again, and locking it from without. Notwithstanding the noise the opening and shutting of the door had made, Cheveley stood for a few seconds within the cell without any of the inmates having moved. The straggling and half-intercepted rays of light that streamed athwart the gloom from the high narrow grating, near the ceiling, made it difficult at first to distinguish the objects they scarcely served to reveal. In one corner was a straw pallet, on which lay Mary Lee’s child, sleeping as calmly as if a prison was but another sort of cradle, with one arm round Wasp’s neck. The dog turned his glaring eyes towards the door as it opened, but looked too broken-hearted to bark, merely turning round and licking the child’s cheek ; and then, with a low moan, curling itself up again, and silently following Cheveley with his eyes, which, in the darkness, looked like large topazes. Near a small table, his elbow leaning on it, and his face shaded by his hand, sat John Lee, while at his feet sat Mary, her face buried in his lap. Neither of them spoke nor moved ; and Cheveley was so affected by the scene before him, that it was some minutes before he could do so either.

“Lee,” said he at length, “this is a grievous business ; I sincerely believe you have no right to be here. Tell me how it all happened, and perhaps I may be able to serve you.”

The old man raised his head slowly, and said bitterly, “Serve me ! yes, as others have served me, and that is well. What more

does he want?—our lives?—he will have them. The same hands he got to steal, in order to ruin us, he can get to lie, in order to murder us; is not that enough? Must he have usurious thanks upon the insult of proffered services?—services from him—no, no! the very devil himself does not give sin such high wages.” So saying, he buried his face again in his hands.

“Indeed you mistake,” said Cheveley, in even a kinder tone than before; “I come from no one, but merely wish, as a matter of common justice, to see you righted, and help you, if I can.”

“Father,” said Mary, raising her head, and looking imploringly up in his face, “listen to him; he has a kind voice, and perhaps God at last may have sent us a friend.”

“Look at me,” said Cheveley, “do you not remember me? You once did some work for me—last March, I think it was—at Cheveley.”

“Remember you, my lord,” cried the old man, rising, “I have not met with so much kindness, that I should be likely to forget yours; but it is too good of you to come to such a place as this;” and as he spoke, he placed the chair for Cheveley that he had been sitting on; the latter, however, declined it, by seating himself upon the table.

“Oh, sir!—my lord!—save him! Indeed, indeed, he is innocent; he never took those things!” cried Mary, passionately flinging herself at Cheveley’s feet, who, as he raised her, and begged of her to calm herself, said,

“I feel convinced he never did; and it is this conviction that has brought me here, as I want to have a statement of the whole business from yourselves.”

The old man then proceeded to give him almost verbatim the same account of the officers searching his cottage, and the manner in which he was taken to prison, as Stokes had done; adding, as he concluded,

“And now, so help me God, sir, I know no more how the things came there, nor who placed them there, than you do; and this is as true as death; and yet it must be some one well acquainted with my house that hid them where they were.”

“But in that case, whom do you know that you can suspect bears you such ill-will?” asked Cheveley.

“There it is, my lord; the only person who knows every turn about my cottage is one whose regard and fidelity to me I would vouch for with my life—one Madge Brindal, a gipsy girl, whom your lordship may remember brought you to our cottage.”

Cheveley did remember, and the conversation he had overheard among the ruins also flashed across him; but then, whatever light he placed that in, it was evident that nothing hostile to the Lees could be gleaned from it. But, again, there was another person beside Madge concerned in it; a man—who, or what could he be? And here he became lost in fruitless conjectures, as he asked,

“Is there no one else that you can think of?—do no men ever come and see you, and are consequently acquainted with the arrangements of your house, and might have placed the things in your desk?”

“None, my lord—at least, none that hate me enough to injure me so much; for except my own sons, John Stokes, and Miles Datchet, the captain of a merchantman, are the only men who have darkened my doors these twelve months past. Oh! no, no! it was none of my companions that have done it.”

“Who, then, *do* you suspect? for, yourself being guiltless, some one must be guilty.”

“Who should I suspect, but the villain who first robbed me of what I loved more than my life—my child, my poor Mary; and having stolen her good name, he now kindly filches mine, that they may go together. But the reason is plain,” continued the old man, vehemently baring his breast, and gasping as he spoke; “he thought, forsooth, I’d tell the people what a paragon he was, and prove that those who break all laws are not quite fit to make them. And ’tis better, and fitter, and wiser, that twenty poor wretches like me should rot in a gaol, or be branded as felons, than that one fine gentleman like my Lord De Clifford should lose an election!”

“Father,” said Mary, smoothing down the old man’s silver hair, that the wind from the grating was blowing about, “do sit out of the draught; you are so warm, you will catch cold.”

“Do come farther this way,” urged Cheveley, as Lee rocked himself to and fro in his chair, naturally wrought to a great pitch of excitement, at the thought of all he had endured, and was still likely to endure. “Do come farther this way, for I have a letter for you, that a boy gave me at the gate; perhaps it may contain some good news; and you will see to read it better over here; and this basket I was to give to you,” added Cheveley, handing it to Mary; “and I was to be sure and say that part of its contents were for the little dog.”

“Thank you, my lord,” said Mary, “I’m sorry any one should have given you so much trouble; how can we ever thank you for all your goodness to us?”

“By not desponding too much, and recollecting, that God never forsakes, even when he most tries us: everything proves to us, that truth is one of the highest attributes of the Almighty; for, being opposed as it is on all sides, and the semblance of truth so often passing for the reality, through the medium of plausible appearances; yet, so really powerful and unerring is its operation, that though it may lie hid in darkness for ever so long a time,—like the sun, under a cloud, it eventually struggles through it, and triumphantly proclaims its own glory.”

“True, true, my lord, you are right; God bless you for what

you say, and forgive me for repining, as I do; but mine is a hard—hard lot to bear, and, I sometimes think, I am too old for heavy burdens now.”

“Father,” said Mary, brushing the tears away from her eyes, “shall I read that letter for you?”

“Do, child, and tell me what it’s about, and who it’s from, but it is encroaching upon your lordship’s goodness to let you remain in this dismal place, it is bad enough for those who are obliged to do so.”

“That is neither you, nor I,” said Cheveley; “so I hope you’ll not be very sorry to leave it.”

“Ah, my lord,” said the old man, shaking his head, “two long months won’t see me out of it.”

“But a few short minutes may,” said Cheveley; “for I have secured tolerable rooms for you in the jailor’s house, where you will at least have fresh air and sunshine.”

Lee stared at him for a moment as if he did not quite understand him, and then, bursting into tears, exclaimed, “Oh, my lord, you are too—too good to us: what can I say to you? nothing; for, when the heart is full, words are empty; may God Almighty bless you,—and he will.”

“One thing you must do for me,” said Cheveley. “Don’t let the jailor know who I am, or any one, that I have been to see you. Now, remember, if any trash gets into the papers about it, I shall be seriously angry.”

“I would not for the world make you so,” said the old man; “but it is hard to burst with gratitude, and not be allowed to tell it.”

“Yes, we may tell it to God, father,” sobbed Mary, throwing her arms round his neck, “and he will repay it, though we cannot.”

“Come, come,” said Cheveley, who felt a choking sensation in his throat, “the jailor will be here presently, and you had better read your letter before he comes, as the boy who brought it is to return for an answer in an hour.”

“It is from Madge Brindal, father,” said Mary, when she had read it; “and, though she is as full of hope as ever, and mysterious assurances that all will go well, yet she says, that—that—I cannot name him—pretends there is a large diamond missing out of one of the buttons.”

“Does he? ah! well, it’s clear there is no stone as yet missing out of his heart,” cried he, with a short husky laugh.

Here the grating of the key in the lock of the door announced Darby’s return; who, bowing obsequiously as he entered, and albeit, contrary to his usual custom, leaving the door wide open after him, said, the “Partmens *was* quite ready for *Mister* Lee, and *p’raps* the *gemlen* would be so good as to go with him just to see as they *was* all conformable.”

“Remember,” whispered Cheveley, to the old man, “no more lordships.”

“Very well, sir,” replied Lee, aloud.

“Now, *Miss*,” said Davie, “push on if *you* please; I’ll carry the *babby* for you, or any other luggage you may have; that’s the best of our lodgings, there’s so little trouble in packing up when the tenants *comes* to moves out of them:—beg your pardon, Mister Lee, I’ll *jist* step on with that ere trunk of yours; thank you, sir, that’s the time of day.”

Mary took her child in one arm, and gave the other to her father. Mr. Darby slung the trunk across his left shoulder, and took a bundle in his right hand, while Wasp kept close at his heels, giving them an occasional snap whenever he could spare time from his avocation of looking up at the trunk, which he seemed sadly afraid would either evade his *surveillance* by flying away with Davie, or Davie with it; neither of which catastrophes, we are happy to say, took place.

Mrs. Darby had got tea ready; and, although it was a broiling hot day in June, her ideas of comfort being inseparably connected with heat, she had a large yellow-fever-looking plate of hot buttered toast ready also,—and, in short, was motherly and affectionate to Mary, and grand-motherly to the child in the extreme; having attempted its life with a green apple before it was in the house five minutes.

Cheveley’s only wish now was, that she would *not* attend to the Lees, but leave them to themselves; which, having got her to promise, he departed, amid the silent but fervent blessings of both father and daughter; which, even had they been breathed aloud, could not have drowned the awful imprecations, demoniac laughter, and piteous lamentations that fell upon his ear and curdled his blood, as he crossed the court to regain the street.

CHAPTER XXXII.

“Tel brille au second rang qui s’éclipse au premier.”

I do pity unlearned gentlemen on a rainy day.—LORD FALKLAND.

———Moi, voyez-vous, Monsieur l’Essoufflé, je n’ai point de ces intrigues qui font les amis, et les amis qui font applaudir.—LE BÉNÉFICIAIRE, *Comédie*.

Mrs. *Major* Fitzagony’s fly coming up;

Mrs. *Colonel* Pilaw’s chair—she stays to sup;

Dear! the mayor’s old fat wife has flown in a rage,

And thrown all the cards at the head of Miss Page;

Mr. Lush, very drunk, enacts King Cambyzes,

While his partner’s engaged in the myst’ries of *Ices*.

It was the beginning of September, a month sacred to geese, game, and garrulity, inasmuch as people assemble to eat and talk in

country-houses; and the Dowager Lady De Clifford's, for a wonder, was full among others; but it was in the very thick of the Triverton election, and, at the end of the second day, the poll stood thus :

De Clifford	-	-	-	474
Dinely	-	-	-	456
Hobson	-	-	-	312

Gentlemen with sound lungs, and a talent for shaking hands, are invaluable at an election; consequently, Lord De Clifford had imported Messrs. Fuzboz, Feedwell, and De Rivoli, who had recently arrived in England, and was extremely anxious to see an election. Major Nonplus was also retained as receiver-general, for his lordship knew, by experience, that a great deal of unpopularity is often incurred, in going the rounds, by not being able to consume *all* the stale cake, Cape Madeira, and sausage (!) sandwiches, that are set before popular candidates at *all* the houses: here, then, the gallant major was invaluable, for he had that sort of gastronomic vanity, that could swallow *anything* and *everything*; and in the art of kissing children he could not have been excelled by a foundling hospital nurse. Yet, notwithstanding this legion of able coadjutors, Lord De Clifford had a great deal to contend with. In the first place, Triverton swarmed with dissenters. To be sure, as far as pulling down the established church went, and railing at the clergy, he got on extremely well, but then Lord Albert Dinely had stolen a march upon him, by presenting the Anabaptists with a large stone basin, big enough for a donkey to bathe in; and a handsome and extensive tankard to the Muggletonians, for their *love feasts*: this gave Lord Albert a decided 'vantage ground. Next, his mother was by no means too well pleased to have so many people to feed and fawn upon, and it was absolutely necessary to keep her in good humour. And last, though not least, that very evening there was to be a *dance* at the Tymmons's, to which he and his whole party *must* go, and never once relax in his most assiduous "To solicit the honour of your vote and interest" manner; then the next day came the election dinner, at which a ten years' stock of patience and patriotism would be required. All this was very trying certainly, but there was a gleam of sunshine through it all—the Lees were safely secured, beyond the power of tormenting him. The morning of his second day's canvassing had commenced with a deluge of rain, which continued the whole day; therefore his "aides-de-camp" had been reduced to Fuzboz and Major Nonplus: as Monsieur De Rivoli thought that rain, accompanied with fog, was exceedingly injurious to the complexion, from the fact of its making people bilious; and Mr. Feedwell declared, that going out in the wet always made him feel like a fungus, and that he should not be able

to eat a morsel at the dinner the next day, or annihilate the young ladies that evening, if he tampered with himself in the morning; consequently, he and Monsieur De Rivoli remained "tête-à-tête" the whole day, stretched on opposite sofas, each giving the other to understand, that it was utterly impossible *he* ever could have made a conquest.

It was about half-past five when Lord De Clifford returned, not so well pleased with his second day's canvass as he had been with the first, on account of Lord Albert's increasing popularity with the dissenters. In any dilemma he was (with a degree of filial affection that was truly amiable) in the habit of consulting his mother's judgment; and accordingly, though he knew she was not fond of being disturbed when Frump was enacting the part of the Graces, he repaired to her dressing-room. No sooner had his knock been answered, by a permission to come in, than Frump (who had she been "valet de chambre" even to Napoleon, would have still kept him a hero to her in spite of himself) immediately withdrew.

"Well, my dear, how is the poll? I hear you got on *vaustly* well to-day."

"Pretty well, my dear ma'am; but those d—d methodists plague me. Dinely has made himself so devilish popular with them. I wish you could strike out something, anything, that would seem religious, that we might do. *You* understand those sort of things, my dear ma'am. Do devise something that would tell *permanently* amongst them."

"'Pon my word, my dear," replied the dowager, assuming a thoughtful attitude, by placing the two forefingers of her right hand to her temple, under the frizette, and the other two on her chin, "it's difficult to know what to do—let me see—oh, I'll tell you; suppose I make the servants fast twice a-week."

"Now really, my dear ma'am, that's not a bad idea; but, as I always say, I know no one in point of cleverness to compare to you."

"Very just observation, my dear; and if every one had the sense to think, so the world would go on a great deal better than it does."

"But now," resumed Lord De Clifford, affectionately taking his mother's hand, "I have a *very, very* great favour to ask you: a woman of superior understanding like you must know that private feelings should always yield to public good."

"Lord! my dear," interrupted the dowager, who began to fear that her son was going to ask for more money for his election, "you alarm me by such a long preamble; can't you come to the *pint* at once? But however, I think it right to tell you beforehand, if it's anything about politics, I'm inexorable; for you know I'm a Tory, as I think every *landed proprietor* ought to be. And these here Radicals are such lords of the creation, that let them commit what trespasses they will, there's no warning them off the premises; and Grindall tells me he has more trouble with

them than enough. No, no, my dear, I really cannot encourage Radicalism, and the rights of the people, and all that sort of thing, even to gain you your election ; for I always had that sort of independent spirit about me, like my mother, that when I wanted nothing, I never would put myself out of the way for any one ; and I must say I 'm very glad to hear that Radical fellow Hobson is the last on the poll."

"What I was going to ask you, my dear ma'am, has nothing on earth to do with politics, but may have a great deal to do with making me popular, or the reverse."

"Oh, my dear, that 's quite another affair ; what is it?"

"Why, that d—d fellow Hoskins is in London, so we shan't be annoyed by the sight of him ; but his wife, old Mac Screw that was, is to be at the Tymmons's to-night, and I want you to be civil to her. You know she lent Herbert two thousand pounds last year, though, having got that appointment in Russia, he has not wanted it for his election ; but still it would be very impolitic in us to quarrel with her, especially just at this crisis ; and as every one knows how infamously Hoskins has behaved to you, your noticing his wife will appear doubly magnanimous ; and, indeed, mark more strongly your disapprobation of him, of whom you need never at any period take the slightest notice."

"Well, my dear, there is some sense in your last observation ; but really I have no patience with the old fool for marrying that fellow."

"Oh, d—n it, I do n't know, my dear ma'am ; any man is good enough for any woman, always excepting the solitary instance of yourself and my father."

"Certainly, my dear ; a woman of spirit, courage, and every feminine virtue, was vaustly thrown away upon him. But you had better go and dress, for we dine at half-past six, on account of this here tiresome party at the Tymmons's."

"Then you will be civil to Mrs. Hoskins to-night?"

"Oh, certainly, as far as asking her how she does, and how she came to make such a fool of herself, goes. Be so good, my dear, as to pull that bell, as you go by, for Frump."

As soon as Frump re-appeared, her ladyship completed her toilette, which consisted of a claret-coloured gros de Naples dress, made high up to her throat, over which were arranged three diamond necklaces in succession, and two gold chains, fastened in the centre of her bosom by a vinaigrette in the form of an envelope, with a ruby seal, intended to represent a frank, inscribed as follows :—

Triverton, November 14, 180—.

To the Viscountess Dowager De Clifford,

Blichingly Park.

Herbert Grimstone.

And presented to her by that amiable young man as a commemoration of his first return to parliament! There was a humility that was quite charming about her ladyship's diamonds; for they did not disdain associating with the most homely things, as they proved, by a wreath of brilliants going across a very shabby, somewhat tumbled, and not over clean morning cap, trimmed with the very narrowest blonde that is made, while Scotch pebbles, and dim gold bracelets, jostled very handsome diamond ones. A large pocket-handkerchief, of fine, but thick cambric, with a hem so narrow that it looked as if Mrs. Noah had employed her ingenuity on it "*pour passer le temps*" in the ark; and a very small transparent horn fan, with a wreath of roses and forget-me-nots round it, completed her "*parure*;" which having done, we will leave the illustrious lady to go down to dinner, while we go and take a survey of Mrs. Tymmons's preparations for her party.

In the first place, Mr. Tymmons had ordered *real* Champagne from "the Golden Fleece" at Triverton, and made himself extremely busy about what he called appropriate devices for everything on the supper-table; in the centre of which was a spun sugar effigy of Lord De Clifford being chaired, surmounted by two mottos, the first of which was "*Ducit amor patriæ*," done in gold, while immediately under it, in coloured comfits, was inscribed "*Sweet's the love that meets return!*"—this Mr. Tymmons thought witty in the extreme, and laughed for an hour at his own brillancy; but as punning, like every other vice, increases frightfully when once indulged in, he farther proceeded to write on pieces of paper the words "*lapsus linguæ*," which he placed on every dish of tongue sandwiches; but his chef-d'œuvre consisted in putting a large empty dish in a very conspicuous part of the table, containing another placard, with "*Hobson's choice*" written on it; and having concluded these elegant arrangements, by impressing upon the waiters that the popping of the champagne corks should be distinctly and regularly heard every two minutes, like the Tower guns firing for the birth of an heir-apparent, he retired to his study, to take what he called "*a snooze*" before the company arrived.

Mrs. Hoskins being on a visit in the house, all bride though she was, thought she ought to make herself useful; and after having manufactured a sort of galvanized white satin pyramid, to wear that evening as a head-dress, and placed the three black hollyhocks in the front of it, she very kindly offered to make lemonade with cream of tartar, and farther hinted, that soap-suds well beat up, it was impossible to tell in appearance from trifle; and as few people eat sweet things, it saved a great deal of expense; but this motion was negatived by Mr. Tymmons, who said it savoured too much of *close shaving* for his taste. Mrs. Tymmons herself had been in a perfect mosaic of *fusses* since seven in the morning, al-

ugh her new blue satin dress (blue being the De Clifford colour) arrived quite safely from London, and only three inches too across the back and shoulders. And Grimmy had been so having only spilt an ink-stand over *one* sofa, and stuck three into an air cushion, that had been placed at a card-table for Mrs. Wrigglechops, the mayor's wife, to sit upon, as she was apt to be unequivocal in her demonstrations of displeasure, when every thing was not arranged according to her satisfaction.

Those abominations, white cravats, having again come into fashion, and travelled by easy stages down to Blichingly, Mr. Joseph Tymmons had spent the whole morning in essaying what he had so often tried before, to tie the happy knot; and Mr. Rush was equally occupied with experimental philosophy, by endeavouring to calculate how far he might venture to bare his throat without endangering his life.

The young ladies had remained in their bed-rooms all day, with their hair in paper, and had not gone down to dinner for fear of making their noses red, as "*the officers*" were *all* coming from Triverton,—but the worst of it was, more than half of them were married men; but there was one comfort, however, which was, that Miss Isabella knew to a *certainty*, for she had heard *them say* so, that neither Captain Cub nor Major Dragglesfar admired any of the *Simmons's*. The candles were at length lit, the ringlets at length uncased, the blue satin dress at length squeezed together, Mr. Joseph's cravat at length tied, and Mr. Tymmons, just ten minutes before the arrival of the first guest, at length awake, when he was alarmed by a loud scream underneath his study, which could proceed from no other quarter but the kitchen.

"God bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Tymmons, rushing down stairs, followed by Mrs. T. tucking up the blue satin, while even the young ladies ventured as far as the head of the stairs; "bless my soul! I hope nothing has happened to the white soup, or the mulligatawny. Mary, Hanna, Sarah, what is the matter!"

"Alonho! Alonho! what on earth's the matter?" cried Mrs. Tymmons.

"Nothing at all, ma'am," said Alonzo, working himself into a new livery, and shaking the powder, whose first appearance it was in that quarter, out of his hair, "it's only Mr. Rush a trying to kiss the maids."

"And do you call *that* nothing! Alonho?" said Mrs. Tymmons, turning up her eyes with horror; "but ladies can't interfere in *thuch* things. Mither, I hope you'll notice such conduct *ath* it *de-therves*."

"Glad the soup's safe, though; certainly my dear, certainly," added Mr. Tymmons aloud. "Rush, come here, sir; follow me to my study."

"Oh Rush," sighed Mrs. Tymmons, as her son followed his father into the study, and she walked on to the drawing-room; "who'd have believed you could do anything of the *thort*!"

"Shut the door, sir," said Mr. Tymmons, placing himself majestically in an arm-chair; "how comes all this uproar, sir, on a night that your mother has company too?"

Mr. Rush looked at the carpet, and remarked what he had never done before, though he had known it for the last ten years, i. e., that it had blue in it as well as orange, and green; but answer he made none.

"How comes it, I say, sir?" reiterated his sire; but he was still silent.

"I'll tell you how it comes," resumed Mr. Tymmons senior; "it all comes of your being such a confounded ugly dog. When I was your age, sir, the maids never screamed when I kissed them. You may go now, and kiss your sisters if you please, but never attempt to kiss any one else as long as you live,—until you can do it without sending them into fits."

Mr. Rush had scarcely closed the study door after him, before a loud knock was heard at the street-door, and Alonzo having been ordered not to move from behind it the whole night, before the knock had well ceased, the door was opened, and, according to the most approved fashion of all country towns, one of the waiters announced

"*Mrs. Major Tadpole!*" Next followed, *Mrs. Colonel Crumpet.*"

Then, "the Mayor and Mrs. Wrigglechops, Miss Catfuss, and Miss Priscilla Catfuss."

"Dr. Quackemall."

Meanwhile Mr. and Mrs. Tymmons stood like Gog and Magog, at each side of the door, to receive their guests, while the young ladies sat ranged on a neighbouring sofa, in their white muslin frocks, divided by their black-coated brothers, like the keys of a piano; and anxiously listening for the dulcet names of Cub, and Draggelfar; but, as Miss Seraphina remarked to her sister, they were too *genteel* (!) to come early. Presently "Mr., Mrs., and the Miss Simmons's were announced. The Miss Tymmons's rose, making a face, but greeted them with a most affectionate "how de do, dears?"

Now the eldest Miss Simmons had very fine hair, and, from dressing it low, had got a village 'renommée' of being like Grisi, especially as she sang after a manner. On that evening her hair happened to be particularly well arranged: and though Captain Cub did not admire her, he had been once guilty of admiring her hair. This Miss Isabella Tymmons remembered, and under the plea of settling a hair pin that was visible, nearly pulled it all down. However, malice generally defeats itself, and poor Miss

Simmons, not dreaming it had been done on purpose, good humouredly twisted it up again, even in a more becoming form than it had been before; at the very moment too, when Major Draggles and Captain Cub entered the room! The latter immediately secured Miss Isabella for the first quadrille; but she pathetically lamented that the dancing could not commence till Lord De Clifford and his mother arrived. However they had not long to wait, for soon after the whole party from Blichingly made their appearance. The Dowager and Lord De Clifford first, with their best popularity smile, bowing, and shaking hands with every one, and Messieurs Nonplus, Fuzboz, Feedwell, and de Rivoli, bringing up the rear, the latter having been announced as

“Mister Drivler.”

“La! what a pity,” remarked *Mrs. Major Tadpole* to *Mrs. Colonel Crumpet*, “to wear those beautiful diamonds, with that dowdy old cap, and morning dress.”

“What beautiful diamonds?”

“Why, old Lady De Clifford’s.”

“Ah, so it is; Crumpet has long promised me a diamond sprig, and you may be sure you won’t see *me* wear it with such a dress as that.”

“No, my dear, but you’re always so *fashnable* and *dashing* in your dress: but if a *Colonel’s lady* was n’t, I am sure I don’t know who should be.”

“Ah, Tadpole, you’re a flattering puss; but I thought there was some story about Lady De Clifford’s diamonds having been stolen.”

“No, it was some studs of his, and the people are in prison for it now. Dear me, he’s not at all handsome, is he?”

“No, but he looks *fashnable* too. I wonder what on earth Cub sees in Isabella Tymmons to flirt with; it will be a shocking bad match for him, with his connexions; I’ll really get Crumpet to speak to him.”

“Oh, it’s *she* who flirts with him; she won’t let him alone.”

“I really think it will be v- v- v- *very* dishonourable, if she does not *propose* for him, after all the attention she has paid him. Mrs. Tadpole, how d- d- do you do? I am delighted to meet you again,” said Mr. Frederick Feedwell, extending his hand.

“Mr. Feedwell,” said the lady, turning round, “of all people in the world, I am surprised at *meeting you* here.”

“And I,” said Frederick, “am equally surprised at my good f- f- f- fortune in *meeting you* here.”

“Oh, *we* are quartered at Triverton,” responded Mrs. Tadpole; “but how long is it since you left Brussels?”

“Very shortly after you went,” replied Frederick; “for, when you were gone, of course there was n-n-n- *nothing* worth staying for;” and, so saying, he jerked up his two fingers, at the im-

minent risk of breaking a long willow feather that drooped from Mrs. Wrigglechop's black velvet hat, who gave him a look sufficiently sharp to quarter him for a *salmi*. Here a sort of court-circle of the natives began to form, round which Lord De Clifford and his mother went bowing, curtsying, smiling, hand-shaking, and making tender inquiries after the healths of people whom they did not care were dead and buried, provided their votes survived them. With regard to the moral and physical progress of the juvenile portion of the community, Lord De Clifford was peculiarly solicitous; — and Master Grimstone Tymmons having indefatigably followed him, till he had nearly torn one skirt of his coat off, he turned round to his father, with a benign smile, and said,

“Tymmons, I'm afraid that dear boy grows thin, he ought not to keep such late hours.”

“Very *natrel* you should wish to see every thing *plumper* just now, my lord,” replied Mr. Tymmons, winking his right eye, and laughing immoderately at this villanous pun, in which mirth Lord De Clifford was obliged to join with a “ha! ha! ha! very good indeed; I see you're as witty as ever.”

“Feedwell,” whispered Lord De Clifford, touching Frederick's arm, “you must go and talk to the Miss Tymmons's; ask them to dance; and remember, they *hate* the Simmons's, but, ‘au sage un demi-mot.’”

“Who the d-d-deuce are the Simmons's, my dear fellow? — do all the people's names rhyme in this part of the world, eh? — I'll tell you something by and by about that Mrs. Tadpole; I knew her at Brussels,—that woman I was talking to just now.”

“Well, never mind telling me about any women to-night,” said De Clifford, peevishly.

“*Womens* you should say, my dear fellow,” replied Frederick, “to rhyme with Simmons, and Tymmons, you know—but where are these Simmons's that I am to abuse to the Tymmons's.

“There, those tall gawky girls in pink, they are Dinelyites, or, as they call them here, *pinks*.”

And, so saying, Lord De Clifford took Mr. Frederick Feedwell up to Miss Tymmons, and said, he was most anxious to have the honour of being presented to her. Miss Tymmons hated Miss Simmons so much, that she always began by admiring her—

“Do n't you think Miss Simmons very handsome?” inquired Seraphina, of Frederick.

“Handsome! the very reverse, I should say; but then, to be sure, *I* only admire blondes,” replied he, looking languidly at Miss Tymmons's Pompadour hair.

“She is reckoned so like Grisi,” persisted that young lady.”

“She has a *greasy* look, certainly,” retorted Frederick, “but she has by no means a look of *Grisi*.”

"You are a sad quiz, I'm afraid, Mr. Feedwell," murmured Seraphina.

"Happy are those whom it is im- p- p- p- possible to quiz," sighed Frederick, looking marriage-settlements at her.

Miss Seraphina looked down, but to her poetical imagination, the chalk laurels, and reform flags on the floor, were converted into triangular pieces of bride-cake and enamelled cards, bearing the names of "Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Feedwell," tied together with a silver cord.

"Will you do me the honour of dancing the next quadrille?" said Frederick.

"Are your family aware of it?" murmured Seraphina, still in the United Service Club of her own thoughts.

"They are aware that I never dance, but t- t- t- temptation, you know, Miss Simmons!"

"Not quite so unfortunate as to be Miss *Simmons*, either, Mr. Feedwell," retorted the young lady, indignantly.

"Really, when I look at *you*, I forget everything," sighed Frederick, twitching his wig a little more over his right eye; "but, for the very short time you are likely to be Miss *Tymmons* either, it does not matter about one's being correct to a T."

No wife of a week's standing could look more fondly forgiving at her husband after some slight and first offence, than did Miss Seraphina Tymmons at Mr. Frederick Feedwell, as he led her to her place in the quadrille. Major Nonplus having duly disturbed every one and everything at the card-tables, and upset two salvers of ices, now sauntered through the room in quest of farther adventures, and perceiving Mrs. Hoskins sitting close to the musicians, where, from her brown merino dress, and brown fur tippet, she might, but for the white satin pyramid, herself have passed for a *violoncello*, he walked up and accosted her with,—

"Mrs. Hoskins, your most obedient, how is my friend Hoskins? lucky fellow,—passed the honeymoon at Birmingham, did n't you? how did you like it, eh?"

"Oh, horrid place, horrid place; we had lodgings over a fur-shop, and I was distracted with the noise of thumping and hammering all night; and when I inquired the reason of it, the woman of the house told me, that they were pounding cat-skins into foreign furs."

"Ah, I perceive," said Major Nonplus, taking up the corner of Mrs. Hoskins's tippet, "this is a foreign fur."

"What a useless expense these election balls are," said Mrs. Hoskins, "except when they are given by the members to the electors, and then they're all very well. So Mr. Herbert Grimstone did not stand after all; very odd his borrowing money for that purpose—that purpose, you know, and not doing so."

“No, he’s got an appointment in Russia; some people slip through the world as if they were oiled, and my friend Herbert is certainly one of them.”

Here the dowager came up, and making the bride a curtsey, thirty degrees below zero, hoped she was well, and assured her she felt for her being married to such a man, adding, “I trust, my dear madam, you have not given the staff out of your own hand.”

“Oh! no, I’ve taken very good care to tie up my money in my own power; nothing like taking care of the main chance, you know—the *main chance*.”

“Very just observation; and such prudence, I’m sure, does great credit to your head and *hort*. I often envy you the way in which your property is vested, for it is impossible to conceive the trouble we *landed proprietors* have: all *these here* Poor Laws, and Corn Laws, and tithes, are *vaustly* annoying; and when the *landed proprietor* is a female, they are sure to be imposed upon, especially when they are of a liberal generous *sperit*, like myself. I’m sick of seeing the puffs in the paper about the beef, coals, and blankets, Lord Sudbury gives to the poor, when, as Grindall says, they are nothing to the rabbits and watergruel that I give; and when there’s company in the house, I make it a *pint*, instead of paying the women who weed the gravel walks in the shrubberies, to let them come and eat up the scraps, which they have comfortably sent to them in the tool-house.”

“I’ll tell you what makes an excellent soup for the poor,” said Mrs Hoskins, “though your ladyship does everything on such a liberal scale, I dare say you are already aware of it: potato skins, *well* boiled, with *plenty of water*, and a *little* oatmeal; and if you wish to make it *very* rich, put, while boiling, a couple of ends of mould candles into it. Oh! it’s an *excellent* soup—for the *poor*, you know, for the *poor*.”

“Did you ever try it on any one?” asked Major Nonplus.

“Oh dear yes, a servant I had once, I fed her on nothing else for a month; but she was a poor sickly creature, and got ill, so I was obliged to send her away; those sort of people never know when they’re well off—I dare say she’s starving now.”

“I should think,” said the Major, seizing a handful of rout-cakes as they passed, “that *that* was a trade which, if learnt at all, would be learnt in a month; so perhaps she’s doing very well.”

Just at this moment Monsieur De Rivoli touched Major Nonplus’s elbow, and taking him to a little distance, said, looking at and round Mrs. Hoskins,

“Ah! quelle drôle de chose, my dear fellow; can it be par hazard le costume ancien d’Angleterre?”

“Hush! she is a bride.”

“A bride?”

“Yes.”

“Oh ciel! where is de man dat have de ‘mauvais gout’ to make dat?”

Here the music began playing “The Cachucha,” and the people reeling (for it could not be called waltzing) round; the men vehemently see-sawing their partners’ arm up and down, as insurance men do the handle of a pump on the night of a fire. One young gentleman in particular, whose head wine as well as waltzing had made giddy, fell with his partner, in a horizontal position, at Major Nonplus’s and Monsieur De Rivoli’s feet, and nearly pushed them into Mrs. Hoskins’s lap, who was sitting alone, old Lady De Clifford having left her, to do the popular to some one else.

“Pretty tune this, pretty tune,” said Mrs. Hoskins, by way of reassuring the gentlemen after their “contretemps.” “What is it? What’s the name of it?”

“‘The Cachucha,’” replied the major.

“The cat what?” interrogated Mrs. Hoskins.

“‘Cachucha:’ it’s a Spanish word.”

“Oh, then, I’m sure I never shall be able to pronounce it.”

“Ha! ha! ha! I know you always find it difficult to bring out the *Spanish*; however, I dare say my friend Hoskins will make you do it yet,” said the major; “but there’s nothing like a technical memory. Now, I’ll put you in the way of remembering the word cachucha: if you were to desire an English cat to eat a French cat, what would you say?”

“Oh dear! shocking! I’m sure I don’t know, for I never should think of doing such a thing.”

“Well, but suppose you were, what would you say, eh?”

“Oh, but I can’t suppose it.”

“Well, you give it up, do you? Then I’ll tell you:—you’d say to the English cat, ‘cat-chew-cha,’ you know, cachucha. Ha! ha! ha!”

There is no knowing how much longer Major Nonplus might have laughed at his own inanity, had not the attention of the whole room been called to a violent squabble at the card-table, between Mrs. Wrigglechops and Miss Drucilla Catfuss, or rather an attack upon poor Miss Drucilla on the part of Mrs. Wrigglechops. The former had laid down her cards, and, with all the mildness and amiability that belongs to that epoch of female existence, had announced herself “vingt-un.”

“You’re no such thing, ma’am, and every body sees and knows that you’re not,” vociferated Mrs. Wrigglechops, thumping the table with her clenched hands.

“You know, Mrs. Wrigglechops,” pined Miss Drucilla, even more meekly and mildly than before, “the ace is either one or eleven.”

"The ace is either *won* or *lost*, ma'am; so no shuffling, ma'am, if you please, for it won't do here," whizzed Mrs. Wrigglechops; and suddenly turning to her husband, a poor little wizzened man, who sat trembling beside her, and looked like a frost-bitten Ripston pippin, in a bay wig, that had evidently acquired the habit of standing on end at Mrs. Wrigglechops, and appeared to have serious thoughts of retreating altogether from the head of the wearer, "Wrigglechops," cried she, seizing and shaking his arm, "why, are you dumb? *Can* you sit by and see your wife so insulted? *you*, the head of the corporation, too, why don't you speak?"

But Wrigglechops, never being allowed to speak at home, found it difficult to do so abroad, and, after three ineffectual hems, he was still silent.

Pay the money, then, sir—pay the money, since you *like* to be cheated and *won't* dispute it."

"Ahem, ahem, my dear," whispered the grey *mayor*, who in that family certainly was not the better horse; "I have no money: I asked you twice for some, you know, before we came out, but you wouldn't, I mean you forgot, to give me any, and I have only the sixpence change out of the darning-needles I bought you this morning.

Luckily for Mr. Wrigglechops' safe steerage through the *needles*, where he was well-nigh splitting on the rock of his *bigger-half's* displeasure, hearing the fracas, Mrs. Tymmons had sent Lord De Clifford to request Mrs. Wrigglechops would favour them with a little music. Now, Mrs. Wrigglechops was not a little vain of her science in music, and thought she excelled as much in harmony, as every one else acknowledged she did in discord. So taking Lord De Clifford's arm, she strode away to the piano, where she belaboured that beautiful thing of Herz's, "*La Violette*," as though every note had been a husband, and every finger a cane. But, as

"Music has power to soothe the savage breast,"

Where was Fuzboz all this time? Why, "man delighted him not, nor woman either," so he thought law might, and therefore retired into Mr. Tymmons's study, snuffed the candles, stirred the fire, seated himself in *the* arm chair, and taking down the first volume of "*Burgh's Political Disquisitions*," read till he came to the 47th page, and pondered over the following passage:—

"Here we see 56 members (about a ninth part of the whole for England) are sent into the House of Commons by 364 votes, which number ought not to send in one member; for no member ought to be elected by fewer than the majority of 800, upon the most moderate calculation, in order to give 410,000 voters their due and equally distributed share of legislative power; without which

equal distribution, the majority of the men of property are enslaved to the handful of beggars, who, by electing the majority of the House of Commons, have so great an overbalance of power over them, as to be able to carry every point in direct opposition to their opinion and to their interest."

"D——d nonsense," muttered Fuzboz, and then he thought of his last political article in the "Investigator," and, naturally enough, fell fast asleep. Now it so happened, that Master Grimstone Tymmons was like the devil, inasmuch as he was never idle; add to which he inherited all his father's wit; but at his tender age it was apt to display itself more in practical jokes than in "bon mots." All the morning he had evinced his party spirit, by dabbing his nursery-maid's cherry cheeks with a blue bag, telling her that pink was Lord Albert Dinely's colour, and she must not wear it; a white cat and a macaw he had also *bagged*, and was much charmed at his sport.

As the night advanced, he grew cross and sleepy, but would *not* go to bed; and finding there was not sufficient scope for his genius in the crowd of the dancing-room, he suddenly recollected that it was a long time since he had broken the glasses of his father's spectacles, and that he might as well go and do it then, while he thought of it. But we are all the creatures of circumstance, and the firmest resolves often melt, like ice beneath the sun, under its unforeseen influence. So it was with Master Tymmons; for upon opening the door of his father's *sanctum*, a spectacle awaited him that quite drove the spectacles out of his head. There sat Fuzboz, his limbs, as usual, cased in Russia ducks (which, as the Irishwoman said in the gallery of the Dublin Theatre, would have been *all the better for a swim*) his feet stretched out, while on them perched the white cat that Master Grimstone had blued that morning; his head rested on the back of the chair, and his mouth opened wide, emitting most somnolent music. There was a grotesque ugliness in Fuzboz's face that tickled Master Tymmons's fancy exceedingly, and inspired him with the idea that a little blue would be a great relief to so much black. And as with all geniuses to plan and to achieve are one, he noiselessly glided out of the room, ran up stairs to his nursery, seized the elective franchise blue-bag, plunged it into water, and redescended to the study, where he held it to the fire for a few minutes, lest the shock of the cold water should awaken his victim. These preliminaries over, he proceeded cautiously on tip-toe to convert the small segment of a nose which Fuzboz possessed into a very excellent representation of a blighted Orleans plum; and that his cheeks and eyebrows might not feel themselves neglected, he bestowed equal attention upon them. At this stage of the business, Fuzboz winced a little, being tickled with the flannel of the bag, and Master Grimstone

retreated for a minute behind his chair, till Somnus had again established his reign, when the youthful Apelles,—thinking that blue studs well dropped, and a flowing pattern over the Russia ducks, would considerably improve the whole,—again stepped forward, and, having achieved his glorious task, stood clapping his hands pantomimically before it, till being unable any longer to suppress his laughter, he left the room. Alas! Fuzboz is not the only one in the world who sleeps soundly, not dreaming how blue they shall look when they awake; and, accordingly, on he slept till the supper went in and the fire went out, and from these combined causes he awoke: for the din that came from the supper-room was tremendous, and the cold of the study was intense.

“D—n it,” said Fuzboz, rubbing his eyes, which operation shaded off the blue on his cheeks rather unbecomingly, “I’ve been asleep, I suppose: by all this clatter of knives and forks, they are eating in the next room. I’ll go and get something to eat too.” And so saying, with another yawn, he rose and walked into the supper-room. As Fuzboz entered, Mr. Tymmons with a champagne-glass in his hand, which he occasionally pirouetted in the air, was in the midst of a *neat and appropriate speech*, in which he was about to give Lord De Clifford’s health; and at that very moment concluded with these words: “and now, ladies and gentlemen, unaccustomed as I am to public speaking, I shall not trespass farther on your time, than to propose the health of one, whom even had he never had a seat in Parliament, I am sure would still have had one in every heart present. I mean our worthy member, for our member he *was*, and our member he *will* be again, before this time to-morrow, Viscount De Clifford.” Tremendous applause, in which six wine-glasses were broken, and Mrs. Tymmons looked as if she thought she should be so too. “And remember, ladies and gentlemen,” added he, “that the most effectual method we can adopt, to make our opponents look *black*, is by every one of us, to a man, looking *blue*.” Hear! hear! hear! and great applause, in which Fuzboz joined, as he advanced towards the table, where he had no sooner taken his place, than every one became convulsed with laughter, except Lord De Clifford, who did not understand Fuzboz, his jackall, his whipper-in, his boots, his retail Rugantino, “playing such pranks before high heaven,” at such a time! Could he mean to throw ridicule on *his* august person? and if not, who in their turn could have presumed to take such liberties with so great a man, as his literary and political scavenger? It was most surprising! most mysterious!—and the mystery might have remained unsolved till doom’s day, had not Master Grimstone, proud of the excessive satisfaction his handy-work had occasioned, boldly stepped forward, and proclaimed himself the author of it; whereupon, he was ordered to bed, and carried thither “*vi et*

armis." Mrs. Wrigglechops thanked God *she* had never had a child. Mrs. Hoskins hoped she never might have one. And Fuzboz declared the young rascal would live to be a Tory?

Delightful as *all* parties are, and as this one was in particular, the time must come when people must go, and that time had now arrived. Alonzo was still standing behind the door, where his powder had been blowing about the whole night, during the ball; and chaotic was the confusion of cloaks, shawls, caleches, and clogs; while so dense and yellow was the fog, that all the flies looked like flies in amber, as Mrs. Wrigglechops stepped into hers, and drove off, telling her husband to be sure and put *Mrs. Major Tadpole* safe into her chair.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"The people of England experience no more aid from their supposed representatives than if the House of Commons was, in form and avowal, what it is in truth and substance, a chamber for registering ministerial edicts."

The parson he preaches, the doctor he leeches,
And water extinguishes fire!
But elections! they teach us, that dinners and speeches,
Are *all* that the people require.
For as for the Poor Laws, we know they are sure laws,
Making famine as fertile as sloes,
With such excellent Boor Laws, who'd try to cure laws,
Not the Whigs, sir, as all the world knows.

AT twelve o'clock on the morning after Mrs. Tymmons's party, the returning officer had declared Lord De Clifford duly elected, and by a quarter past one, he had addressed the free and independent electors of Triverton, from the balcony of the Golden Fleece, in a blue waistcoat, and a liberal speech, after which, he was chaired up, and down, and round, the town, in a very handsome chair, with a pepper-caster top, wreathed with blue ribbons, and yellow crysanthemums, while before it walked many hundreds of the hatless and coatless patriots, intoxicated with the spirit—of liberty, and bearing flags with the following inscriptions,—

"Vote by Ballot."

"Civil and Religious Liberty."

"De Clifford, the man of the people."

"No Corn Laws."

While immediately over the chair waved a banner, containing an inscription of the popular member's own concocting, which ran as follows:

"The strength of a people is vested in themselves;

"Their liberty can only be obtained by themselves;

"And their rights can be protected by *none but themselves*."

These truths, coming as they did from a beautiful blue satin flag, of course elicited loud cheers, with cries of "De Clifford for ever!" But it was not till they passed Hobson's hustings, and the band struck up "See the conquering hero comes," as a delicate attention to the defeated candidate, that Mr. Frederick Feedwell (who formed the fourth in a britschka with Monsieur De Rivoli, Major Nonplus, and Fuzboz) thought sufficient allusion had been made to himself individually, to call for any manifestations on his part; but he no sooner heard this inspiring air, than he took off his hat, and bowed most graciously to the right and to the left. The Dowager Lady De Clifford followed in a close carriage; the four black horses had blue rosettes, and Frump had taken care to exchange the green veil that usually adorned her ladyship's lavender silk bonnet, for one of sky blue crape, which had a charming effect against the faded lilac of the figured silk.

The chairing was over at four; and, as the dinner was to take place at five, Lord De Clifford and his friends had arranged to dress at the Golden Fleece. Frederick had taken the precaution of eating no breakfast; for how could he have managed a five-o'clock dinner if he had? and as he never travelled two miles from home without Horsdœuvre, he had desired him to superintend the dressing of all the things for Lord De Clifford's end of the table, and afterwards to dress himself, and stand behind his, Mr. Frederick Feedwell's chair, to watch that he did not incontinently venture upon any experiments of native talent. Monsieur De Rivoli having ascertained that the large screen he saw at one end of the dining room was placed there for the accommodation of the wives and daughters of Lord De Clifford's constituents, that they might be edified by hearing the speeches that swayed their husbands and brothers' politics, resolved upon a *toilette recherchée* on speculation. And Major Nonplus having with great assiduity ferretted out that Mr. Lamb, mine host of the Golden Fleece, had actually in his cellar six bottles of Côte-d'Or, made interest to get them placed in a basket under the table, where he was to sit, fully intending in the course of the evening to relieve guard in that quarter himself.

Fuzboz had his preparations to make too; but they were of a different nature, his Russia ducks being like the laws of the Medes and Persians, inasmuch as they "altered not," for dinner, breakfast, or supper; and as it still wanted three quarters of an hour to the dinner, he sat down and wrote a full account of nearly all that *was to take place* at it for "the Investigator;" he also put a speech into Mr. Wrigglechops' mouth, which the poor man never would, and, what was "more germane to the matter," never *could* make, in which he made him insidiously confound the late with the present Lord Cheveley's politics, and upon that ground denounce the

latter as an apostate, anathematising him with a couplet from Lucan's *Pharsalia* :—

“ Audax venali comitatur curio lingua
Vox quandam populi libertatemque tueri
Ausus.”

Poor Mr. Wrigglechops! he would as soon have thought of swallowing laurel leaves as quoting Latin, seeing he did not know a syllable of it; for having been for many years churchwarden before he was mayor, he was of opinion that the dead should be left to rest in peace; and as for making a speech at all, he would rather have submitted to a beating from his wife any day, than have attempted such a thing; for he was used to the one, and therefore got over it very well, but Heaven only knows how he would have got through the other; so that, all sceptic as he was, Fuzboz must have acknowledged in his heart that his making the dumb speak was nothing less than a miracle!

Five o'clock at length arrived, and with it the guests. Luke-warm dishes, with tin covers, were placed on the table; and those most patriotic of all sounds, the drawing of corks, and clatter of knives and forks, were heard.

“ You do n't know me, sir, do you?” asked a man in a bottle-green coat, gilt buttons, and a long capsicum-coloured scorbutic face, who was shovelling knife-loads of cod into his mouth, as he sat on one side of Mr. Frederick Feedwell.

Frederick had a mind to be facetious, and therefore replied,

“ Yes, you are a *fishmonger*.”

“ Well, now, so I am; I should n't have thought as you'd have remembered me; I'm Sounds, the fishmonger, in Hungerford Market. Do n't you remember a tiff you and I had once about the price of a turbot, the time as you fought that pop-gun duel with Muster Jackson? Well, that very day, not knowing whether you'd live to eat it, that French chap as you had for a cook—why, catch me, if that ain't he a stanning behind your chair now!—well, he comed down to the market and *hordered* a turbot, and you said the lobster sauce of it warn't good, and refused to pay more nor thirty shillings for it; so I was obleged to take the law on you. But at a time like this, sir, when the freedom of *hour* country, *hand* the liberties of *Henglishmen*, *his*, I trust, secured by the *glorus* result of this day's 'lection, I should not call myself a man, if I was n't willing to drown *hall* *hanimosities* in the sea of reconciliation! So I shall be *wery* 'appy to take *vine* with you, sir, *hand* drink to forget and forgive!—that's my way of doing business!”

So saying, Mr. Sounds poured out a glass of Cape Madeira, that had assumed the travelling title of sherry, and having given notice of its descent by a loud smack of the lips, again turned to Frederick, and patronizingly inquired whether he should help him to cod?

“Thank you; I ne-ne-ne-never eat cod,” said he; “I only take the oyster sauce;” a fact that he clearly demonstrated, by conveying the whole contents of a tureen that Horsdœuvre had just brought him, into his plate, to the great dismay of Mr. Wrigglechops, who sat within two of him, with his fish cooling before him, in anxious expectation of its “old familiar friends,” the oysters.

“Come, come, fair play’s a jewel, as the fox said to the goose,” cried Mr. Sounds, eyeing the diorama of the “rocher de cancale” on Frederick’s plate. “*Munoply* his the distruction of trade; *hif* hevery vone as to turn themselves *hinto* hoyster-beds, as you do, what would become of the cods? Vy, the sea vould be *hover* pop’lated; and that would be a pretty business, beyond the power of the government to reg’late.”

“Let us hope, Mr.—what name may I admire your sound sense by?” parenthesised Frederick.

“You’ve hit it; sir—Sound. My name is Sounds, sir, *has* I told *ee* before. Jacob Sounds, of No.—, Hungerford Market, London; and 45, Westgate Street, Triverton.”

“I was going to observe, Mr. Cod Sounds, ——”

“Jacob, sir, if you please.”

“—Je-Je-Je- Jacob Sounds, that no doubt were the marine over-population that you dread to insue, there would be some ultra-marine Malthus and Martineau found among the whales, that would set it all to rights; but with such a member as yours,” added Mr. Frederick Feedwell, who never could resist a sneer at his best friends, “earth, air, and water, will all be well regulated.”

“Why certainly he’s a thorough-going Reformer, as thinks nothink of his *hown* *hinterest* compared to the people’s—for he told us so in his speech to day.”

“And what stronger proof of his integrity can you require?” smiled Frederick. “I’d advise you to make the most of him, for you never can hope to get another like him!”

“I don’t say that neither,” deprecated Mr. Sounds; “for it’s my maxim that there’s as good fish in the sea as *hever* vas caught; and reform is a good strong net, as catches *hall* sorts of *hodd* fish. So ve’ll *ope* for the best.”

“Y a-t-il du gibier?” whispered Frederick to Horsdœuvre.

“Oui, de potence, je crois, monsieur,” replied that distinguished artiste; “for one man at de oder table, when I go just now to ask for some of de bœuf Anglais dat have been hanged, for Monsieur le Major Nonplus, he say to me if I was Jacques Ketch; mais ils sont tous des politiques polissons ici, je crois; moi j’aime les politiques au riz; comment appelez-vous cela, au riz, Tory?—ah, oui, Tory, c’est ça.”

“Tais-toi,” said Frederick; “and take these beignets to Mr. Fuzboz, that gentleman opposite.”

“Ah oui, le Monsieur avec le nez bémolisé.”

“Mr. Mayor,” said Mr. Chubb, the cheesemonger, protruding his chin across the table, “the pleasure of a glass of wine with you?”

“With pleasure, Mr. Chubb.”

“Your good health, sir.”

“The same to you, sir.”

“I think I saw your *lady*, Mr. Wrigglechops, on the hustings this morning. Mrs. Chubb and my girls *was* just five minutes too late to get a good place; however, they’ll hear the speeches to-night.”

Mrs. Wrigglechops was also to hear the speeches that night; and it was just possible she might at that very moment be within ear-shot, behind the screen. So the Mayor replied, in a much louder tone than his usual *consort* pitch:

“Yes, sir, thanks to Mrs. Wrigglechops, no one is ever too late in *her* house; every thing is like clock-work there.”

“Very true,” chuckled Mr. Tymmons to Mr. Snooks, the shoemaker; “and I’m sure he and she are the clock itself, for when her hand is at *strike* he’s always *silent*. Ha! ha! ha!”

Here the din of voices, and clatter of knives, plates, and glasses, became tremendous, and precluded all conversation but that of a complimentary nature, which the louder it is uttered the better.

“What a fine boy that *do* grow of yours, at the Blue Coat School,” bellowed Mr. Scraggs, the butcher, to Mr. Grain, the glazier.

“*Lawr*, do you think so?” replied Mr. Grain; “his mother and I thinks him quite a ruffian; he eats *tremenjus*!”

“Well, I was thinking,” said Scraggs, “as you had had more meat since he’ve been home; but depend upon it, Grain, it’s a *wicious* way of bringing *hup* the rising *genration*, not to let ’em *ave* plenty of *wittles*, ’specially meat; and that’s the reason as I do n’t *prove* of the New Poor Laws.”

“Very true,” said Mr. Butts, the brewer; “meat, and *plenty* of *beer*, is the best thing you can give a child, rely upon it.”

“Give them plenty of *beer*,” said Mr. Tymmons, “and then, I suppose, you mean to say, nothing will ever *ale* them! he! he! he! he!”

One of those sudden and awful silences, that sometimes take place in a crowd, now ensued, and betrayed Mr. Tymmons ha! ha-ing all by himself. “Non nobis domini,” was then played, the cloth was removed, the vice-president rose, and thumping three times distinctly on the table, cried out,—

“Gentlemen, charge your glasses.”

“That *wee’ll* be sure to do,” whispered Mr. Lamb, the landlord, to Mr. Brown, the wine-merchant.

“The Queen,” was then drunk, and the national anthem played; next followed,

“The Duchess of Kent, and the Royal family.” Then came

“Lord Melford, and her Majesty’s ministers;” three times three.

But the vice-president begged to propose an amendment, that Lord Melford’s health might again be drunk by itself.

Unbounded applause.

AIR—“ ‘Mid pleasures and palaces.”

“And now, gentlemen,” said Mr. Gullwell, the vice-president, again rising,—who, with a white pocket-handkerchief in his right hand, accompanied his periods by occasionally shifting the wine-glasses before him, and changing the position, first of his right foot, and then of his left, much after the manner of the late lamented Mr. Matthews, in his inimitable “At homes”—“and now, gentlemen, often as it has been my grateful pride to address you,—upon no former occasion did I ever feel such pride and such gratitude as I do on the present—(hear! hear! hear!)—for to-night we are met to celebrate, for the fourth time, the return (for the loyal and independent Borough of Triverton) of a member, who, whether we view him in the private life which he endears, or the public one which he adorns, alike must command our esteem, our admiration, and our gratitude!—(Hear! hear! hear! and tremendous thumping of the table.) Gentlemen, we live in times, when, as the hero of Trafalgar proclaimed, ‘England expects every man to do his duty’—and when was England ever yet disappointed in such an expectation? The men of Triverton, as the termination of this day’s contest can certify, have gloriously *done* theirs, and great is their reward, for all that the country at large demands in its representatives—and therefore, like the Grecian painter who required perfection, have to seek in *many*, they have had the singular good fortune to find in *one*—is it the stern, the incorruptible, the self-sacrificing patriotism of ancient Rome you require?—you have it in him. Seek you the living model of that filial virtue which Seneca has so lauded to posterity in a Manlius and a Xenophon, in him you will find it excelled—in short, whether as husband, father, brother, statesman, or friend, virtue wants an all-comprising name—she has but to pronounce that of De Clifford!”—(hear! hear! hear! great table thumping, and several glasses broken)—“Truly may he say of his splendid achievements in the cause of reform—

‘Exegi monumentum ære perennius.’

And now, gentlemen, knowing that it will find an echo in every heart here, I will propose the health of our enlightened and patriotic member—Viscount De Clifford!”

“Viscount De Clifford!”

“Hip! hip! hip! hurrah!”—(nine times nine.)

When the plaudits had in some measure subsided, Lord De Clifford rose, with all that bashfulness peculiar to hackneyed speakers and girls of fifteen, and spoke as follows :—

“Gentlemen, in once more rising to address you, with Triverton and its inhabitants for my theme, I find I am for the first time in my life destitute of words; and yet this should not be, for you are *one and all* in my heart, and ‘out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh’”—(hear! hear! hear!)—“I will speak, then, but it shall be of that which is and ever shall be most dear to me—*your* interests; I should be unworthy of being *their* depository, were I undeserving of the eulogium my honourable friend the vice-president has this night pronounced upon me—*no*, it is the conviction *that I am deserving of it*, which makes me feel that I am worthy of *you* ;”—(tremendous applause from Fuzboz, followed in a few minutes by the rest of the guests)—“need I remind you that I was among the first of your leaders, who, despairing that a corrupt body like a Tory House of Commons should voluntarily reform itself, urged and obtained the interposition of the *people*? for I knew that dispersed and abstract efforts must be unavailing; that in such an enterprise unity of purpose and combination of exertion could alone insure success; for I, for one, was never deterred from appealing to the *people*, by that miserable commonplace of invective that would brand me as the diffuser of discontents, and the provoker of sedition—*no*, I know too well the nothingness of a jargon that does not even deserve to be dignified with so specious a name as *sophistry*, and felt for it that contempt which a man of common capacity must always feel, and which an honest man will always express.”—(hear! hear! hear!)—“I and all the friends of reform were told, that though we knew the limits of our own reforms, we could not prescribe limits to the desire of innovation their success might awaken in the minds of the people; to so threadbare a generality, it was scarcely necessary to oppose another commonplace, that no abuse could be reformed if all institutions are to be inflexibly maintained. Yet it was a provocative to do so, when the friends of reform were continually told to remember that no government could be secure if change were perpetually allowed—nay, this battered objection was issued as a fiat, and for a long time implicitly obeyed by the servile majority.—

‘Tibi summum rerum judicium dii dedere—
Nobis obsequii gloria relicta est.’”

(Loud cheers from the *gentlemen* at the lower end of the table, who did *not* understand Latin, and consequently did not detect the plagiarism.) “But happily that majority was succeeded by a greater and more liberal one; and many who deplored the madness of our temerity in venturing our all in the bark of Reform, as long as it was buffetting the stormy ocean of opposition, are willing enough to hail its success with their cowardly cheers, now that the gale of popular feeling, and the strong current of public opinion, together with its having been so *ably manned*, have brought it

safely into port ; but I would warn you to be cautious of that support, which never would have been offered, but that it is no longer wanted. Having achieved this glorious victory, now let us study to maintain it ; which can only be done by giving to the people that high and healthy tone of morals, which places them beyond oppression on the one hand, and above sedition on the other.” (Hear, hear, hear.) “But a people’s morals, like their power, must emanate from themselves ; it is by cultivating all the finer and holier yarn of humanity, that woofs our nature, that *that* nature must be improved. Our homes and hearths are the nurseries of our virtues or our vices. The ‘boy is father to the man’—the acorn must be planted before the oak can flourish. Are you children ? So am I. Are you fathers ? So am I. Are you husbands, and does your existence twine round a dearer self ? So does mine.” (Audible sobs from behind the screen.) “And it is by all these nearest and dearest ties of our common nature, that I appeal to you,—that I conjure you, to weed, to prune, and to train the minds of the future men and women that are intrusted to your care. It is not so much by making punishments terrible, and vice hideous, that I would deprive them of followers, as by making virtue lovely, and justice attainable. I would ask no greater boon, than that I might live to see every gaol in the kingdom replaced by a garden, and every gibbet exchanged for a gymnasium.” (Hear, hear, hear, and an uproar of applause.) “And now, my friends and fellow-townsmen, if I have not thanked you for your kind and zealous support, which I feel the more proud of, from the conviction that it was given to the *measures*, and not the *man*, it is because I *cannot*. There has been such a run upon my gratitude, that though it is far, *very far* from a state of bankruptcy, yet it will require time, perhaps my whole life, to repay you the balance of obligation I owe you.” (Hear, hear, hear.) “I will not, therefore, trespass farther on your patience, than to bid you engrave upon your hearts the inscription I had on my banner this morning, and remember that

‘ *The strength of a people is vested in themselves,*

‘ *Their liberty can only be obtained by themselves.*’

“One word more. Without detracting from my obligations to you, gentlemen, I feel that I should not have been brought in so *handsomely*, that is, on such *fair* grounds, had not your wives and daughters lent me *their* countenance. I, therefore, must beg leave to propose the health of the ladies of Triverton and its vicinity.”

The noble lord then sat down amid uproarious acclamations, especially from Mr. Wrigglechops, and great giggling from behind the screen. The ladies’ health having been drunk, they took the hint ; and, not to injure it by sitting up too late, instantly departed ; but Mrs. Wrigglechops was so melted by the conjugal pathos of

parts of Lord De Clifford's speech, that she sent Mr. Wrigglechops a shilling round, by one of the waiters, in case he should like to go home in a fly: and Miss Caroline Chubb was in such a fever of admiration that she said she should die if she did not get a bit of his lordship's writing.

"For, me, I do n't think he could take it amiss, if I *was* to send round, and ask him for a frank; after *our* Frank getting him three plumpers."

"Well, s'pose you do, Carry," assented Mrs. Chubb, "but who 'll you get the frank directed to?"

"Oh dear, I never thought of that! but, as I'm going to Margate myself on Monday, I could get it directed to me; and I should find it in the post-office ready for me, when I get there."

"That's a very good thought, Carry, and it will look so *genteel* besides; for gentlefolks always *has* such loads of letters that I often think they must hire people to write to them: but you can't send a word-of-mouth message to his lordship, it would n't be *purlite*; but just write him a bit of a note,—stop, let Betsy do it; she's used to making out the bills, and writes a better hand."

Accordingly, Betsy went into a small room, where the *ladies* were putting on their clogs and cloaks, and called for a sheet of paper; when, from the force of habit, she began,—

"Viscount De Clifford debtor to T. Chubb."

"Dear me, do n't be so stupid, Betsy," said Miss Caroline, "I'll tell you what to say;" and accordingly she dictated the following billet:—

"Miss C. Chubb presents her respectful compliments to the Right Hon. Viscount De Clifford (M.P. for Triverton), and having the greatest possible wish for his lordship's *cenotaph*, should be greatly *obliged* by his *obliging* her with it in the form of a frank, directed to

'Miss Caroline Chubb, junior.'

Miss C. Chubb having a maiden aunt of that name, eighty-two years of age, sister to her father, living at Ferrybridge, in Yorkshire, will thank his lordship to put the junior, to prevent mistakes.

"Post Office, Margate.

"Isle of Thanet (Kent).

"To be left till called for.

"Golden Fleece Hotel, Friday night, September the 10th, 18—.

"P.S. Miss Caroline Chubb, *junior*, begs to apologise to his lordship for making the above demand, and hopes his lordship won't think of giving the frank unless *quite* convenient."

"That will do uncommon well," said Mrs. Chubb, spelling over the note, "but what is a *cenotaph*, Carry?"

"Laur, ma; I thought every one knew what a *cenotaph* was: why, a *cenotaph* is one's own writing written by another person, to be sure."

"You must remember, Carry," said Mrs. Chubb, "that it is n't

every one that has had the schooling, and *genteel* education, as you've had. I'm sure, I thought, when his lordship was telling us to attend to our children, well! that may be a slap at *some*, but not at *me*: but was n't it a *helegant* speech, ma'am?" inquired Mrs. Chubb of Mrs. Wrigglechops, who was pinning up her gown, and tucking up a white dimity petticoat beyond the fear of mud.

"Yes, *that's* something like a husband! did you mind how he spoke of his wife? Tell Chubb, will you, to send me the best stilton he has, to-morrow; and two pounds of the poorest cheddar he's got, for Wrigglechops: I'm obliged to keep him low; good things do n't agree with him, he's such a poor creature."

"Thank you, ma'm, I'll be sure to attend to it; but do you ever give the mayor (you'll excuse me, ma'am) a new-laid egg, beat up in brandy? It's an excellent thing for people who are rather weak."

"Oh, all the beating up in the world do n't do *him* any good."

Here the waiter returned with the frank, and a note from Lord De Clifford, begging Miss Caroline Chubb, *junior*, would at all times command his services; and assuring her, that he never should be guilty of the bad taste of mistaking her maiden aunt of eighty-two, for the blooming Miss Caroline Chubb, of eighteen; although he might not have the good fortune to be so near either of them as *Margate was to Ferrybridge*.

After the departure of the *ladies*, the *gentlemen*, as is their wont, became happy and unrestrained: Lord De Clifford and his guests retired at midnight, all except Major Nonplus, who had knocked under long before that hour; nor was he a solitary instance, as most of the patriotic assemblage were far from being "*neat as imported*." No speeches of any importance had been made after the screen had become untenanted, for Lady De Clifford's health was the only toast given, to which Lord De Clifford briefly replied, as follows:—

"Gentlemen, in the toast you have just done me the honour of drinking, you have awakened feelings of so home and personal a nature, that it would be *egotism* were I to say more than that *I thank you from the bottom of my heart*."

Here Lord De Clifford pressed both his hands to his breast, and hid his face by bowing down to the table, amid the deafening plaudits of a sympathizing audience. So loud and long continued were the shouts of pure patriotism and universal philanthropy, that, as the wall of their rooms also formed that of the banquet-room of the Golden Fleece, it was four in the morning before Mary Lee and her father could get any sleep, as they lay on their narrow beds in the jailor's house.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Publicity is the soul of justice.—JEREMY BENTHAM.

Injuries we may and do forgive; but insults so debase the mind below its own level, that nothing but revenge can satisfy it.—JUNIUS.

But Time winds up his dread account at last!
Then unsway'd justice, fate's stern gauger comes,
Testing th' unlawful measures of our life,
And into the light and wanting balance throws
The dire portentous record of our doom!—UNPUBLISHED PLAY.

The law's a ass.—MR. BUMBLE.

It was about a week after Lord De Clifford's election dinner, that the day was fixed for the trial of the Lees. Cheveley had constantly been to see them, but could glean no good tidings as to any tangible evidence in their favour, beyond Madge Brindal's vague and mysterious prophecies; of which even Mary herself was beginning to weary. Both Lee and his daughter had passed a sleepless night; and when the day of their doom dawned, even the feeling of conscious innocence, that had hitherto supported them, seemed to desert them at the idea of the terrible ordeal they had to undergo.

"If I get clear out of that accursed court," said the old man, as he placed his spectacles and the packet of Lord De Clifford's letters in the side-pocket of his coat, "I'll go to America; there are no lords there."

"It will be time enough to talk of going to America," replied Madge, who had taken great pains in dressing Mary in a new black dress, and was now busily arranging her bright golden hair down her faded but still beautiful face, "when you have seen the real culprits in this business well exposed, and properly punished."

"And what chance is there of that, Madge? Am I not a poor and an injured man?"

Here a knock came to the door. "Come in," said Lee; and Mrs. Darby entered with her apron to her eyes, to hid the tears she did not shed, as she announced that the "two pleesemen was below, to show Mr. Lee the way to the court-house."

"I am ready," said the old man calmly.

"And so am I," said Mary, in a still more assured voice. "Good bye, darling," added she, stooping to kiss her child, who was sitting on the floor, placing a row of wooden cups and saucers round Wasp, who was patiently sitting within the magic circle, pricking up his ears, and turning his head alternately to and from Madge, his master, and Mary, as they each spoke or moved.

"*Me'll do with oo,*" cried the child, starting up, and letting all his playthings fall, as he held out his little arms to his mother.

"No," said Mary, seizing him in her arms, and bursting into

tears; "they may drag me to a court of justice, if they like, and I may drag my poor father there; but they never shall drag *you* there if your mother can help it!"

"Mary! Mary! is this your firmness?" said the old man. "I thought you were to be an example to me, and that I was not to see a tear, all woman as you are."

"You shall not see another," said Mary, gently putting down the child, and telling him that he must remain with Madge. "Now I am ready to go."

It was a fine fresh autumnal morning, with a bright sun. The judges and barristers had all breakfasted. Mr. Serjeant Puzzlecase had been retained for the plaintiff; who had also had his solicitor, Mr. Helper, down from London. The case was to be tried before Judge Dinely, a brother of Lord Shuffleton's; to whom Lord De Clifford had kindly intimated, that he hoped he would make the sentence on those poor people as lenient as possible, on account of the poor girl, who he understood was deranged. Mr. Serjeant Puzzlecase had made himself so agreeable at breakfast, with anecdotes of the witnesses he had badgered, and the juries he had bamboozled; the innocent people he had inculpated, and the guilty ones he had exculpated; that every one felt sorry when business obliged them to separate.

The court was crowded to excess. Cheveley had mingled with the crowd; and the first persons Mary and her father saw were John Stokes and his wife; the latter sobbing so violently that she was ordered out of court, which had a wonderful effect in subduing her agitation. The din within was now drowned by the clamour from without. It was the cheers of the people, as Lord De Clifford alighted from his carriage. Shortly after his arrival, the prisoners were placed at the bar. The old man held his daughter's hand. She trembled violently, and never raised her eyes; but he looked calmly, almost triumphantly round. A murmur of compassion ran through the court.

Mr. Serjeant Puzzlecase rose; and gracefully lifting up his gown, by placing his left hand behind his back, while his right *pro tempore* rested in his bosom, opened the case for the plaintiff in an eloquent speech, wherein he implored the jury to remember, that although his client had, with his usual benevolent magnanimity, wished (had it been in his power) on the present occasion to have prevented the law taking its course; and, not being able to do so, was anxious that it should be mitigated as much as possible,—"Yet, my lord, and gentlemen of the jury," continued he, raising the clenched hand of his right arm above his head, and curtseying nearly to the ground, as he let it fall again with an electric thump upon the desk, "*this* is an additional reason why *you* should be doubly guarded how you let aggressing vice triumph,

through the forbearing clemency of injured virtue! You are not perhaps aware, and therefore it becomes my duty to inform you, that the heinous offence of which the prisoner, or prisoners, at the bar stand charged, was, according to our ancient Saxon law, nominally punished with death, if the thing stolen was above the value of twelve pence; but the criminal was allowed to redeem his life by a pecuniary ransom: but in the ninth of Henry the First this power of redemption was taken away, and all persons guilty of larceny, above the value of twelve pence, were directed to be hanged; which law continued in force for a long time; and though, according to the stat. fourth of George the First, the inferior species of theft or petit larceny is only punished by imprisonment, or whipping, in common law, yet it may be punished by transportation for seven years. It has also been held, that if two persons steal goods to the amount of thirteen pence, it is *grand larceny* in both; and if one, at different times, steals divers parcels of goods from the same person, which together exceed the value of twelve pence, they *may* be put together in one indictment, and the offender found guilty of grand larceny. But this is very seldom done; the clemency of juries will often make them bring in larceny to be under twelve pence, when it is really of much greater value. But this, though evidently justifiable and proper, when it only reduces the present nominal value of money to the ancient standard, is otherwise a kind of pious perjury; and it is now settled that the value of the property stolen must not only be in the whole of such an amount as the law requires, to constitute a capital offence, but the stealing must be to that amount at one and the same particular time."

The learned gentleman having now sufficiently appealed to the understandings of the jury, by completely puzzling them out of their wits, next began to appeal to their feelings.

"Here then, gentlemen, is the offence not only clearly established, since the value of the property stolen is between two and three hundred pounds. But what will you say, when I tell you that the crime was aggravated by the basest, the blackest, the most unaccountable ingratitude? I would fain spare you so revolting a detail; but justice commands, and I must obey. What will you think, I say, gentlemen of the jury, when I tell you that the plaintiff was the prisoners' patron, benefactor, I may say *friend*; for, superior to the accidental distinctions of birth, *he* is the friend of all mankind. It is only one little year since my noble client, hearing that the defendant's daughter was about to be married, united with his amiable and exemplary mother in bestowing on her a more than adequate dower. This will appear the more magnanimous, when I inform you that the unfortunate young woman had been for some time labouring under an aberration of intellect,

owing to desertion of an unprincipled seducer in her own walk of life; and that her insanity took the turn of imagining the plaintiff to be her betrayer—a supposition carrying absurdity on the face of it, from the fact of the plaintiff's never having resided at Blichingly, till a very short time previous to his going abroad, three years ago. Nevertheless the elder prisoner, without the excuse of his daughter's madness, affects to believe her statement, and repays the most generous patronage and protection, by heaping insults of every description upon my noble client and his illustrious mother."

Here Lord De Clifford, observing the look of fixed contempt and defiance on Lee's face, and that his counsel was taking notes, became very fidgetty, and tried to catch Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase's eye, to make him understand that he need not dwell any longer on *that* part of the subject.

"But, my lord, and gentlemen of the jury," resumed the learned gentleman, "the plaintiff's mercy was indeed of 'an unstrained quality,' for his object was still to return good for evil; and it was only the very day after his last arrival in the county, that he ordered the prisoner to be sent for to Blichingly Park, the residence of his illustrious mother, in order that he might be impartially employed, with other tradesmen. And what was the result? I blush with indignation while I relate it! The grossest insolence, on the part of the prisoner, to the dowager Lady De Clifford's steward; and the abstraction of two valuable diamond studs, the property of her son, value, as the account furnished by Messieurs Storr and Mortimer can testify, three hundred and sixty guineas, besides a gold watch of her ladyship's. To the last the prisoner was hardened and daring in the extreme; for would you believe it, my lord, and gentlemen of the jury, that when the ministers of justice entered his house to search it, he affected to deliver all his keys into their custody with the greatest alacrity. But mark the sequel! the stolen goods were found in the secret drawer of the prisoner's own private desk! and, on being restored to their lawful possessor, a large brilliant was missing from the centre of one of the studs. To what purpose the absent jewel was converted you will be at no loss to decide, when I tell you, gentlemen of the jury, that during the prisoner's and his daughter's stay in the county gaol, instead of the bare cell, befitting their crime and their fortunes, they were the tenants of luxurious apartments, and the consumers of delicate viands, in the gaoler's house. And was it to the compassion, the humanity, the disinterested benevolence of Mr. Davie Darby, the turnkey, or to the milk of human kindness flowing in the bosom of the amiable Mrs. Darby, that the carpenter and his daughter were indebted for these refinements in their *seclusion*? No, gentlemen of the jury, it was to the four

guineas a-week which they paid, and which I can prove that they paid, to Mr. Davie Darby, that they owed it all. Let me then conjure you to be cautious how you allow yourselves to be biassed by the *apparent* respectability of age, or the *should be* innocence of youth. Just as men in general should be just before they are generous, so should a British jury be just before they are merciful."

And with this sublime maxim, and beautiful peroration, down sat Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase, and up rose Mr. Sergeant Carrington for the defendant. But as he had only plain truth on his side, his speech is not worth recording.

The first witness examined was George Newman, hostler at the De Clifford Arms, by Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase.

"What took you to Blichingly Park on Tuesday the 24th of June last, at or about two o'clock in the afternoon?"

Witness—"My feet." (Laughter.)

"Silence in the court."

"No insolence, Sir, if you please," resumed Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase. "What business took you there?"

Witness, scratching his head—"Whoy, measter's business."

Mister Sergeant Puzzlecase—"I did not ask you *whose* business, but what business—on what account did you go there?"

Witness—"On count of the bloind mare."

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase—"Who did you go to see?"

Witness—"To see to get the bloind mare out to grass."

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase—"Who did you speak to?"

Witness—"Master Grindall."

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase—"What did he say?"

Witness—"As I was a fool." (Laughter.)

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase—"Why did he say you were a fool?"

Witness—"Cause I talked of the old lady's having compassion on the poor, and turning out measter's cattle for less than the gentlefolks."

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase—"Did you see the prisoner at the bar on that day?"

Witness—"No, cause I never seed the bar at all afore to-day." (Laughter.)

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase—"Did you see John Lee, the carpenter?"

Witness—"Yeze."

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase—"Where was he?"

Witness—"In Master Grindall's room."

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase—"What was he doing?"

Witness—"Nothing."

Cross-examined by Mr. Sergeant Bungle.

"What was he saying?"

Witness—"The truth."

Mr. Sergeant Bungle—"What about?"

Witness—"About Muster Grindall and his mistress."

Mr. Sergeant Bungle—"What did he say of them?"

Witness—"That they was a couple of reglar old rascals."
(Laughter.)

Mr. Sergeant Bungle—"When John Lee left Mr. Grindall's room, where did he go to?"

Witness—"Home."

Mr. Sergeant Bungle—"How do you know?"

Witness—"Cause I went with him."

Mr. Sergeant Bungle—"Now, recollect yourself; you are quite certain that Lee did not go up the stairs facing the audit-room—Mr. Grindall's room?"

Witness—"Quite certain."

Mr. Sergeant Bungle—"Why are you certain?"

Witness—"Cause he could not go home and go up those stairs at the same time."

Mr. Sergeant Bungle—"Why could not he?"

Witness, brushing his hat with his elbow—"Whoy, cause its only lawyers as can do two contrary things against natur at the same time." (Laughter.)

Mr. Sergeant Bungle—"Witness, you may retire."

Nancy Stokes, the landlady of the De Clifford Arms, was next examined; and deposed—that she was drinking tea with John and Mary Lee, at about six o'clock on the evening of the twenty-fourth of June last, when Thomas Grindall, the dowager Lady De Clifford's steward, and two policemen, entered Lee's cottage with a search-warrant. Lee did not seem surprised at their coming, knowing that all the other houses in the village had been searched, and gave the officers his keys before they asked for them; but seemed perfectly thunderstruck when the diamonds and watch were found in his desk. Witness had known the prisoner many years, and believed him to be a very sober, respectable, and perfectly honest man. Witness thought there was no diamond missing out of the buttons when they were found; could not swear that there was not.

Charles Grant, of the F division, and Joseph Trowbridge, of the G division of the Metropolitan Police, were next examined; and their evidence corroborated the last witness's statement, as to their search of the prisoner's house on the twenty-fourth of June, and his quiet and proper conduct on that occasion.

Several witnesses were also called, who spoke in high terms as to the prisoner's general good character.

Davie Darby, the turnkey of the Triverton gaol, was next examined; and deposed—

For the last two months the prisoner and his daughter had

lodged with him and his wife; and they had been quiet and orderly in every respect.

That one Sunday, the fifth day after they had been in prison, a gentleman had called to see them; had taken the apartments in Darby's house for them; and paid the first month's rent in advance.

Did not know the gentleman's name, or where he lived.

He often called.

The four guineas a-week which he paid was not for the lodging, but for the board and lodging.

Witness did not know the name of the gentleman, never having heard it; but he *was* a gentleman.

"What proof can you give that you are speaking the truth."

"*My* word, which I suppose will suffice," said Cheveley, stepping forward for a moment, and giving the crier his card to hand to the judge.

Lord De Clifford turned for a moment, and glared fearfully upon Cheveley. A presentiment came over him that his presence boded him no good.

Cheveley having been recognised, this part of the evidence was deemed conclusive, and the trial proceeded.

Mr. Sergeant Carrington again addressed the jury for the prisoner; detailing the whole of poor Mary's history, in a speech that was eloquent from its subject, and forcible from its truth. He then produced all Lord De Clifford's letters, whether bearing his own signature or that of William Dale; and compared, analysed, and animadverted upon all and each of them. A great reaction appeared to have taken place in the feelings of the court. The people looked at Lord De Clifford and groaned, and then at the old man, and his pale statue-like daughter, who had never once raised her eyes, and wept. But Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase again rose on behalf of his client, and burst into a perfect hurricane of oratory. He affected to treat the whole business of the letters with sovereign contempt; said they were quite irrelevant to the cause for which the jury had been empanelled; and that he must beg of those gentlemen to come to a decision without farther loss of time, as every possible advantage had been given to the prisoner at the bar, both as to a fair and impartial examination of his cause, and a strict and liberal examination of witnesses on his side; that no clue whatever had been gained towards the slightest exculpation of him or his daughter; that the *facts* remained precisely as they were, namely, that property to a considerable amount had been stolen from his clients, which property had not only been found in the possession, but in the most secret possession of the prisoner. "Now really, gentlemen of the jury," concluded Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase, "you can have no hesitation

in giving your verdict for the plaintiff, with such strong circumstantial evidence against the prisoner, and not a single *proof* that can be adduced in his favour.

“Plenty! plenty!” cried a voice proceeding from one of two men, that were forcing their way through the crowd towards the witness box. The speaker was Miles Datchet; the other Dorio, Lord De Clifford’s valet. The latter turned deadly pale when he beheld them; and perfectly mad, between rage and fear, betrayed himself by gasping out, as he pointed to Datchet, “Secure that man; he is an impostor—a liar. I gave him money to go to Spain.”

“Hush! you had better sit down, my lord,” said Mr. Tymmons. “All will be well.”

But Lord De Clifford knew that all would not be well; and while he had yet strength he hurried from the court, to prepare a last struggle for the newspapers; determined to leave England that night, to prevent the law taking its course, at the suit of a beggar, whom a minute before he thought he had within his grasp, and was about to crush for ever!

Captain Datchet first of all stated, that as far back as last February, Lord De Clifford had consulted him upon the feasibility of getting the Lees imprisoned during his election, and eventually transported. That at first he (Datchet) had recoiled with horror from so black a scheme, but, in order to unmask Lord De Clifford, and ultimately redress the Lees, he had feigned an assent to it. That at first all his communications with Lord De Clifford had been personal; but that, recollecting this would preclude the possibility of bringing any proof against him hereafter, he suddenly affected to misunderstand some of his wishes, and wrote to him from the country; which letter Lord De Clifford answered, giving him full instructions how to proceed; not indeed signing his name, but his hand-writing was too well known to be disputed. He next wrote to him begging he would give him three hundred guineas, and not pounds, to proceed to Spain; which was the stipulation, when all things should be accomplished. To this Lord De Clifford agreed, sending him a draft for that amount, which he then produced in court, as well as Lord De Clifford’s letter, bidding him remember that he was not to return to England under two years.

“When we had decided upon what the things were that were to be conveyed into Lee’s possession,” continued Datchet, “my next difficulty was how to get them there; for there was but one person sufficiently well acquainted with his house to know where to hide them, as if they had been hidden there by him; and this person I knew was too sincerely his friend to be brought into the scheme, without great management. At length, however, I succeeded in convincing her that my only object was to expose Lord De Clifford, and serve the Lees, and she consented. But her promise was

given among the ruins of the old abbey above Cheveley place; and just as she had agreed to every thing, I was startled at hearing footsteps outside the aisle in which we were talking; and fearing lest we might be overheard, I suddenly broke from my companion and hurried down the glen; but she afterwards informed me, that the stranger who was walking there we had no cause to fear would betray us, even had he overheard us." (This part of Miles Datchet's statement Cheveley knew to be perfectly true.) "Well, this was last March, and every thing was to lie over till June. And when Lord De Clifford came down to Blichingly, I suggested that Lee should be sent for to do some work; knowing that he would be incensed at being sent for, and would just go down, as the event proved, to the Park, to vent his indignation. Dorio, Lord De Clifford's valet (as he is here to testify), was desired by his master, that morning, to give me the watch and the diamonds, which I was to give to the person who was to place them in Lee's desk."

Madge Brindal was called into court, and swore to the facts. Lord De Clifford's hand-writing was also sworn to by several respectable witnesses; Cheveley having left the court with a feeling of sickening horror, to avoid being one of them.

Poor Lee was triumphantly acquitted; but Mary had fainted, and it was not till she found herself in the air, with all her former companions, that so long had shunned her, crying over her, and showering down professions of affection and proffers of service, that she came to herself; and then every thing seemed like a painful and confused dream. "Where am I?" said Mary, looking wildly about her.

"With those who love and esteem you more than ever, dear Mary," said several young girls, pressing around her. At length she began to understand that all she saw and heard was real, and she burst into the first flood of happy tears that she had shed for years. Miles Datchet and Madge Brindal, knowing how the trial must terminate, had prepared a banquet among the ruins, to which the whole village were now invited, and which invitation they joyfully accepted.

"Willy is quite safe and well," whispered Madge to Mary, "but he might get cold, and so I thought it better not to bring him."

Mary felt the delicacy of feeling that had prompted this arrangement on the part of Madge, and as she pressed her hand, said—"always kind and considerate, Madge; thinking of, and for, everybody."

Mrs. Stokes had sent her husband up to the inn for a carriage and four, declaring that she would have the Lees made as much of, for that one day at least, as any "*rubbishing* Member among them." And while the crowd were still standing in groups in the market-place, up drove John Stokes, looking more like a lord (in

his own opinion) than a landlord, as he jumped out, and placed Lee, Mary, Madge, and Mrs. Stokes, in the carriage, while he himself ascended the box, and desired the postilions to drive on to the ruins at Cheveley: but the people insisted upon taking the horses off and drawing Lee through the town; in vain he remonstrated—all he said was drowned by their vociferous cheers, which were rather more genuine than those which were wont to echo round the purlieus of the “Golden Fleece.”

The day, as we before stated; was beautifully fine over head, and as it advanced, became quite warm from the sun. Datchet had superintended all the arrangements at the ruins, and had erected temporary arbours of evergreens, which, combining with the natural beauties of the place, made the whole appear like a scene in Boccaccio, and there is a magic in fresh air, sunshine, and happy faces, that won't let people be miserable, if they are ever so well inclined; even Mary felt as she used to feel, and did not go beyond the present, where all were laughing, talking, and rejoicing, till the shades of evening closed in; when Datchet, who was master of the revels, would not allow them to separate, but had large fires of underwood lit in every direction, and the old abbey itself illuminated with torches, so that at a little distance it looked as though it were on fire. After these arrangements, he set all the young people to dance, having provided music for the occasion, while the elder ones sat conversing in groups about the events of the day, and urging Lee to lose no time in prosecuting Lord De Clifford, which was a work of supererogation, as he had resolved not to let another day pass without doing so.

“Hush!” said Mary suddenly, “what was that noise?”

“Nothing,” replied Datchet, “but the tramping of horses’ feet.”

“The tramping of horses’ feet,” echoed Madge, “it’s more than that, listen again.”

They did listen, and distinctly heard low moans, as if from a person in extreme pain.

“The sound comes from the Glen,” said Lee.

“No, from the road,” said Madge, again listening.

“From the road, certainly,” said half a dozen voices.

“Some accident has happened,” said Lee; “we had better go and see if we can be of any use.” So saying, they armed themselves with torches and repaired to the road, followed by the women, all except Mary, who, with a vague dread that some harm would happen to her father, kept by his side. When they reached the road they could see nothing, but heard the sound of a horse’s hoofs galloping furiously away.

“It must be in the lower road,” said Datchet, “if anything has happened. Hush!—Listen—there! I heard groans again. Some one has been thrown from their horse. Whoever they are, I

wonder they should have come this upper road on so dark a night, the precipice is so dangerous, and I should n't wonder if horse and rider, and all, had gone down it. Here, Freddy, go on before, as you take up the least room, and light us down the winding path."

Accordingly they all descended, as quickly as safety would permit, and walked on for about a hundred yards, where they found a man weltering in his blood, with his skull frightfully fractured, and his leg broken and entangled in a stirrup. "Take care," said Mary, with a shudder, "we are walking in his blood."

"Poor creature! I wonder who it is?" said Lee. "Lend a light here, will you, Captain?" and taking the torch out of Datchet's hand, Lee stooped down and removed the gravel and brambles from the face of the dead man, and at the spectacle that awaited him, the old man gasped as though he himself were dying; the forehead and one eye were completely smashed into the head, but all that remained was what had been—Lord De Clifford.

"Ma—Mary," said he in a hollow, low, but awfully distinct voice, extending his hand to draw his daughter to the spot, without removing his eyes from the body, "Mary, *look here!*"

Mary did look, gave one shriek, and sunk senseless into the arms of Madge, who caught her as she fell.

"He is gone; My enemy is gone!" continued the old man, in the same low, hollow, whistling voice, still gazing on the corpse. "He has evaded me, and left nothing but this insolvent flesh to wipe out his great score! But I will be honest; it is none of mine, thank God! They shall have it to whom it belongs. Stand off," cried he, turning to the crowd; "do n't you see, I've work to carry home; look to Mary, there, and some one bring a plank from the ruins."

There was a breathless stillness around, and Miles Datchet and Stokes silently re-ascended the winding path, to obey Lee's command. As soon as they returned with the plank, the body was placed upon it, and Lee ordered four men to carry it. "Here's a rare funeral," said he, "not a single tear, and I chief mourner! Forward, to Blichingly!" cried he, as if giving the word of command, and waving his stick like a sword. As the torchlight glared upon his pale and fearful face, none dared to disobey, but moved slowly on, all except Madge and Datchet, who remained with Mary, to try and get her home. Not a word was uttered by any of the procession as they moved along, till they arrived at the park lodge, when the woman came to the gate. Seeing such a crowd with torches in their hands, she refused to let them enter, till Lee ordered the men to lower the body, that she might see who it was, and then turning to her, said in a loud voice—

"Open, I say! none but the gates of Heaven can refuse to do so to Lord De Clifford!"

"The Lord preserve us!" said the woman, shading her eyes with her hand, to shut out the horrible sight, as she opened the gates to let them pass.

"Amen!" responded Lee, and again they proceeded for two miles through the park in perfect silence, till coming before the hall door, he cried, "Halt!" and having himself pulled the deep-toned bell, which was quickly answered, the servants thinking it was Lord De Clifford returned,—and they thought rightly—

"Stand back, all of you," said Lee, "out of sight, behind that buttress a little way. Tell your mistress *I* want her," said he, to the servant who opened the door.

"Why, Mister Lee!" said the footman, "I am glad to see *you* at liberty again, but I am sorry to say that *I* aint at liberty to deliver your message, for the old lady is busy a-settling accounts with Mr. Grindall."

"Tell her," said Lee, "that I have a longer account for her to settle."

"Why, how much do you take my place to be worth? Nothing, perhaps. Well, that is about the *valley* of it, so I don't care if I do have a shy at her with your message. She can but call me '*sirrah*,' and turn me away; and the comfort of living with her is, that it's *unpossible* to go further and fare worse."

The man then walked lazily away, his footsteps echoing through the great hall, till he turned into a narrow passage off it, and stopped before the door of a small room, in which the old lady always sat. Opposite the door was a modern French rosewood bureau, on the top of which stood a small eight-day mahogany clock with brass mouldings; a few modern rosewood chairs, with brown holland covers, were ranged round the wall on the bare floor, in the centre of which was spread a small piece of Scotch carpet, and on it stood a small oval mahogany table, very black, and highly polished, at which she sat, opposite to Mr. Grindall, with a Pelion upon Ossa of files, papers, and ledgers, between them.

"Is Lord De Clifford come back?" said she, turning sharply round, as the servant opened the door.

"No, my Lady, it's Lee, the carpenter, as says he has a long account for you to settle."

"What insolence! Mr. Grindall, be so good—" but here she grew deadly pale and agitated—"How! can the trial have ended by *his* being here? Go,—ask,—see."

"Compose yourself, my lady, and I will settle everything," said Grindall rising. "But does your ladyship owe him anything?"

"Not a farthing, not a farthing!"

"Oh, then it's a clear case," said Mr. Grindall, reseating him-

self, with a contemptuous smile. "James, tell the old rascal to leave the house instantly."

"Or Mr. Grindall will warn him off the premises."

"And that her ladyship owes him nothing."

"Dear, though, it's very strange that De Clifford is not back yet; it's nearly nine o'clock."

"Oh, it's most likely his lordship remained to dine with the judges; for when I left the court everything was going on as smooth as possible, and Serjeant Puzzlecase was winding up his concluding address to the jury."

"Oh, well, perhaps so." Here James returned.

"Please you, my lady, Lee says as it's something he owes you."

"That he owes me? Well, let him come in as Mr. Grindall is here."

"He says he won't, my lady, for he's took an oath that he'll never set his foot in this house."

"Vaustly impertinent, and you are equally impertinent to bring me such a message. Does that insolent old fellow suppose I'll go to him? No, indeed."

But suddenly her resolve seemed changed, by the loud shouting of several voices, and the quick trampling of horses' feet: she and Grindall simultaneously rushed into the hall. At the great entrance they beheld a crowd of people, and a blaze of torches, which displayed Lord De Clifford's horse, neighing loudly, and covered with blood and foam, galloping furiously round and round the court.

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed the old lady, wringing her hands, as she approached the door, "Where is De Clifford?"

"Where we must all soon be," said Lee, solemnly; "before that tribunal which has but *one* witness—our own soul! and but one judge—the God who made it! Here," continued he, pointing to the body, as the men brought it forward, "here is what *was* your son. And now, having returned good for evil, and brought you your child, who helped to rob me of *mine*, I'll go to what *was* my daughter."

So saying, the crowd gave way, and Lee, giving one short husky laugh as he looked at Grindall, walked rapidly through it, and disappeared.

"Stop—secure—" said the old lady, pointing after him, but before she could finish the sentence, she sunk down in a fit on the corpse of her son.

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CONCLUSION.

When all our leaves of life are sear'd by nature
 In due course, then do we gently fall to sleep
 Within the kind bosom of our mother earth;
 But the Medean spring, whose fierce unnatural wrath
 Doth gem her children's hair with the white blossoms of the grave,
 Robs us of life, ere death has claim'd his debt.—UNPUBLISHED PLAY.

“And when you blush'd, and could not speak,
 I fondly kiss'd your glowing cheek,
 Did that affront you?

Oh, surely not; your eyes express'd
 No wrath, but said, perhaps in jest,—

‘You'll love me, won't you?’

For sure my eyes replied, ‘I will!’

And you believe that promise still,

You do, sweet, don't you?

Yes, yes, when age has made our eyes

Unfit for questions or replies,

You'll love me, won't you?”

HOPE is a telescope, which brings objects within our reach, that are in reality as distant as ever; therefore Cheveley had constantly looked through it for the last eighteen months, at the end of which time he discarded it for reality.

It was a lovely morning, in that sweet and maiden time of year, “the gentle month of May,” that Cheveley arrived at Grimstone, and leaving the carriage at the village inn, walked up to the hall. The birds were caroling their happy concert among the young green leaves, and the butterflies, which had not yet exchanged their bridal wings of virgin white for the more gorgeous and matronly ones of purple and gold, seemed playing hide and seek among the flowers. Cheveley's hand trembled violently, as he opened the iron gate of the invisible paling that led into the lawn. Two figures were sitting under a tulip tree, they were Fanny and little Julia; the latter instantly recognized him, and breaking away from her aunt, ran up to him, and throwing her arms round him, said—

“Dear, dear Mowbray, I *am* so glad to see you again.”

“And I,” said Fanny, extending her hand, “suppose, out of civility, I must say the same thing.”

When Cheveley had kissed the child, and shaken hands very affectionately with Fanny, he stammered out, “Where is Ju—Julia?”

“*Julia*,” replied Fanny, laughing, “is in the drawing-room; there, that room where you see the window open and the blind down; but you really must find your own way there, for I have no idea of losing this fine morning, by playing Major Nonplus, or groom of the chambers, to you.”

“I think you are quite right,” laughed Cheveley, as he kissed her hand and walked on to the window. It was a low mullion

window, one half of which was slid back ; he listened for a moment, and, hearing no sound, gently pushed back the blind and walked in. Lady De Clifford was standing at a table looking for a drawing, with her back to the window ; he walked noiselessly up to her.

“ I wish—” said she aloud.

“ What ?” asked Cheveley, passing his arm round her waist and drawing her towards him. Julia, uttered a faint scream, and then said, with a blush and a smile—

“ That you had not frightened me so.”

“ Julia, *my* Julia !” said Cheveley, kissing her passionately, as her beautiful head rested on his shoulder ; “ does not this moment repay us for all the past ? Is it not enough if there was no future ? ”

“ E vero, vero,” chirped the starling, who had been reinstated within the last few months ; but Julia made no answer, *for there is a love that has no words*, and in this language Cheveley and she conversed for some minutes.

“ I almost wish,” said she at last, “ that we could die *now*, for I, who have never been happy before, am *too* happy.”

“ You shall know nothing else, dearest, but happiness, till you surfeit on it ; and then, for your own good, you know, I must begin a course of conjugal discipline, and make you unhappy again.”

“ Nay,” said Julia.

“ No answer, madam, if you please,” said Cheveley, kissing her into silence ; “ implicit obedience I must and will have.”

* * * * *

A month after this truly marital speech saw Julia, Marchioness of Cheveley, installed at Cheveley Place, as its happy, loving, and beloved mistress. Berryl, all things considered, bore her faculties meekly, notwithstanding that Mr. Sanford began to be *very attentive* to her, till about a year after her mistress's marriage, at the christening of the little Lord Mowbray, when there was such an influx of royalty and fine people, that it was no wonder greatness became an epidemic, and she looked half a head taller.

John Lee and his daughter, with Madge Brindal, who had become Mrs. Datchet, went to America, where Lord Cheveley settled two hundred a-year upon him, and Lady Cheveley promised to provide for Mary's child. Mrs. Stokes and her husband were allowed to change the De Clifford to the Cheveley Arms, with a present of a new house, in which the former was so happy for a whole year, that although the Maidenhead bridge had given way, to the great detriment of the Great Western Railway, and several accidents had happened at sea, she never once thought of attributing any of them to her husband's laziness and stupidity. Mr. and Mrs. Tymmons continued happy in the midst of their *fine family*, which, however, suffered a diminution by Captain Cub's disencumbering them of Miss Isabella ; but, dreadful to relate, the

very day of the wedding, Master Grimstone singed off his brother-in-law's left moustache, so that he found two flames in the Tymmons' family instead of one. Mr. Joseph Tymmons died as he had lived, a bachelor, and no fellow was ever found for the matchless Seraphina. Mr. Rush got a situation as amanuensis to a literary gentleman, where, by a steady perseverance in the course he is now pursuing, he has every prospect of—starving in a garret; his mother says, that he *must* rise, as he speaks Greek and Latin, and all the dead languages, *like a native*, which is likely enough, for he looks like a *corpse*. Alonzo, ungratefully “*left to better himself*,” went to live with Mr. Hoskins, whose wife died of a broken heart at his extravagance, in less than a year. The Simmons's *all* married,—no doubt, as the Tymmons's said, by dint of art. Miss Caroline Chubb continues to collect franks; but Miss Caroline Chubb, of Ferrybridge, having in the course of nature departed this life, Miss Caroline Chubb, of Triverton, was obliged to drop the junior. Mrs. Wrigglechops continued to keep her husband *low*, and regulate his monitory system; therefore, for once, money does *not* make the *mayor* go. Mr. Frederick Feedwell had prevailed upon Mrs. Tadpole to go off with him, and was to meet her for that purpose in a post-chaise, ten miles beyond Triverton; but by some unaccountable mistake, Major Tadpole met him instead, and after a hearty drubbing, left him to pass the night in a ditch, where he caught a feverish cold, that occasioned him more pain than all the indigestions he had ever had. Fuzboz is supposed to be out of print, as no one has ever heard of him since the Triverton election, having been but once seen since that event, *very drunk*, in the porter's chair at the Garrick. Major Nonplus never says a word about his wealth, having been *really* left forty thousand pounds six months ago, the miraculous effect of which has been, to make him talk less and drink more. About a year after the Lees' departure to America, Freddy Flipps, whom they had taken out as “*a help*,” returned, with the news of poor Mary Lee's death. Her father did not long survive her, and Mary's child was brought to England by Datchet, where Lady Cheveley had him well and carefully brought up. The Dowager Lady De Clifford had been in a bad state of health, since her son's awfully sudden death, and having, contrary to Frump's advice, eaten of a crab-apple tart, died of a two day's illness. Her second son, Herbert, the present Lord De Clifford, hastened to England on the melancholy event, but evinced great fortitude and resignation till after the funeral, when it was discovered that, his mother not having made a will, Blichingly went to her grandchild, Julia Grimstone, as heir at law, so that his lordship has nothing to do but to continue a sort of *retail* Talleyrand, *in a very small way*, keeping in with every administration. Monsieur De Rivoli has become a member

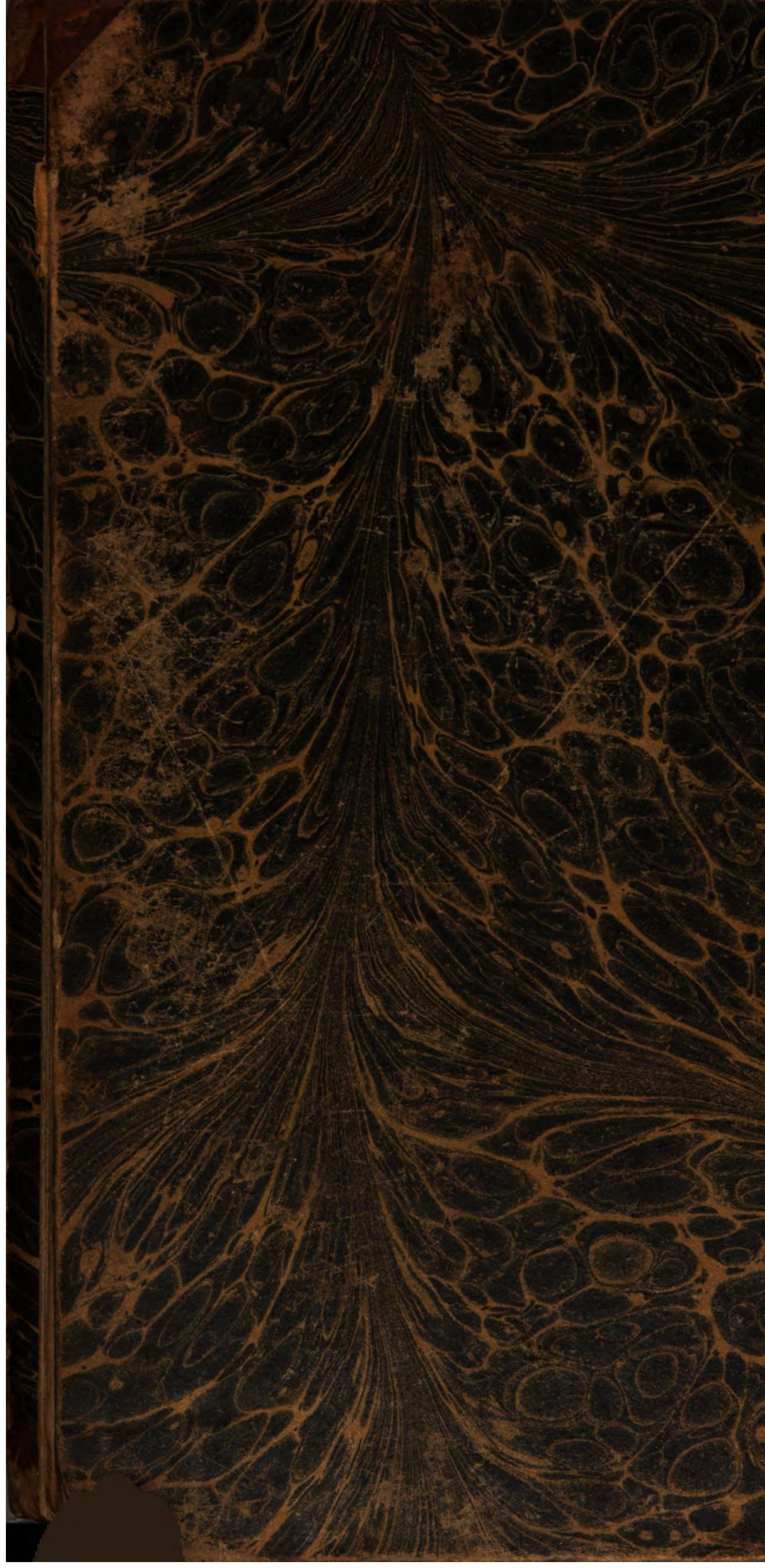
of the Suicide Club, at Paris, suicide being what self-love often ends in. The Savilles and Seymours form a delightful society at Cheveley, whose master and mistress evince their own happiness by diffusing happiness to all around; grateful to God for the blessings he has bestowed upon them, each seems to emulate the other, which shall best deserve them. Cheveley is vulgar enough to doat upon his wife, and Julia's love and respect for her husband increases daily, from finding, that in every relationship of life, from the smallest to the greatest, he is a MAN OF HONOUR.

THE END.

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THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME

THE SECOND VOLUME



Lytton, Rosina Bulwer Lytton,

Cheveley, Or the Man of Honour

Paris 1839

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